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The catechumen







THE CATECHUMEN.



# THE CATECHUMEN:

An Aid

TO THE INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE CATECHISM.

BY

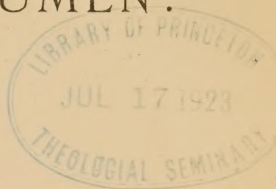
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## PREFACE.

### ON THE OBJECT AND USE OF THIS BOOK.

OBJECT AIMED AT; PLAN OF THE BOOK; METHOD OF STUDYING IT; DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT; METHOD OF TEACHING.

**Object aimed at.**—Those engaged in the work of Christian education see enough in the present day to make them anxious. The dangers to which young people are exposed in regard to their faith, when they enter the world, are already very serious, and there is a prospect of their becoming more so. It is, indeed, a great safeguard against these dangers if they have a thorough and intelligent knowledge of their religion; but not the least of the dangers is the difficulty of securing such a knowledge, in consequence of men's minds being so pre-occupied and their interest engaged in the subjects of the day, which threaten to leave them neither time nor thought for the one thing necessary. How can this difficulty be met? Nothing would seem so efficacious as to begin early with religious knowledge; for nothing lays hold of the heart like the

simple natural instructions given to the child by a Christian mother who is a sensible religious woman. But as the very difficulty of our present position is the want of homes guided by such mothers, we are left to fall back on the influence of early teaching at school; and we say to ourselves that at least there is no reason why the scholar should not be as much interested in the subject of religion as in other subjects, if only it is taught as methodically, skilfully, and thoroughly as they are. To those who believe, there is no subject of such engrossing interest and personal importance as religion, and it can only be through its being carelessly taught and superficially known that it can ordinarily fail to excite the interest which is excited by subjects of less practical import. Why should this be impossible, or even difficult? Yet a close acquaintance with those who are studying religious knowledge in our schools, and those who are learning to teach it, shows, on the whole, a somewhat dangerous deficiency of interest and intelligence in the subject; some falling into the error of making it an exercise of memory only—learning words and terms, and dates and details, but only by way of preparing for examination; while others go more completely into the subject, yet not in a way which would lead to the intelligent knowledge of a well-instructed Christian, but rather into the technicalities of theology, subtle distinctions, and questions of a speculative rather than a practical character—a know-

ledge more likely to puff up the understanding than to influence the heart or confirm the faith.

**Aim of this Book.**—With the view of helping those who are aiming at making religious knowledge more intelligent and practical, and at the request of some who are engaged in this work, I have written the following pages. The book does not pretend to be anything very original, or higher and better than other books of religious instructions, but rather something less than they are—something more easy, simple, and intelligible, dressed up to meet a present want. Certainly it is intended to do more than can be done by compendiums, abridgments, and other cram-books, which, if useful in their own place, yet tend to make religious knowledge—and sometimes this is professed and defended—an affair of memory. The aim of this little book is, on the contrary, to make it interesting and intelligent. Knowledge consists not in any number of facts hung up on independent pegs in the memory, or thrown together into the same tub, but in the relation of one fact to another, and the connection of each fact with its cause and consequences. And while the facts of any science, taken by themselves, are dry, the connection and relationship between them is instructive and highly interesting. Moreover, the facts, when connected, mutually support each other, and cannot easily be pulled down.

What, then, I have set before myself as the point I desired to aim at in writing this little book, is to

help young people, whether professedly students or not, to an easy, yet intelligent, understanding of Christian Faith and Practice—easy, in being simple in style, in not being excessive in the depth or quantity of knowledge aimed at, and in avoiding technical terms and distinctions; intelligent, in treating of each subject in its relation to others, to the objections and difficulties which are opposed to it and to the practice of a Christian life. It seems to me that these two qualities are dependent on each other; that it is a great help to Christian knowledge being learned thoroughly and intelligently, if it can be made easy; and that interest and intelligence being awakened in the subject does a great deal to make it easy.

**Method of studying it.**—I hope, then, that those who are seeking to learn what the Catechism teaches thoroughly and intelligently may find some help in what I have written; and I think they will, *if they study it*. Mere reading it through will not do much, for the necessity of not making it too long has required many subjects to be compressed, instead of being drawn out at length and dilated on. By studying it, I mean noting carefully the subject of each chapter and each paragraph—referring to the chapter of contents at the beginning and the index at the end, to see whether the same subject is spoken of elsewhere; reading again and again the passages of Scripture referred to, as nowhere else can we find things put so pithily, pointedly, and forcibly as



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in Holy Scripture ; making notes of the subjects which are closely related to the one we have in hand, or which illustrate it ; and then reading the chapter again. In this way the meaning will come out, and the intelligence and interest be excited. Used in this way, the book may be of service ; in any other, I should have little hope of it.

**Division of the Subject.**—Making a division of the subjects of religious knowledge is difficult, and to a certain extent is misleading ; for each subject is connected with other subjects, and that so closely that it cannot be clearly and completely understood without a knowledge of those other subjects. Still, for facility of study, some division is necessary, and the old and simple one found in the Catechism is here adopted. The Catechism sets forth what is necessary for salvation. To save our souls we must begin, first, by believing what God has revealed. The chief and most necessary truths of revelation are contained in the Apostles' Creed. Secondly, we must practise what God has commanded ; and His will is to be found chiefly in the Ten Commandments. And thirdly, since we cannot please God or fulfil His commands without the support and assistance of His Grace, the third subject of Christian doctrine is 'Grace, and the Means of Grace,' or the Sacraments and Prayer.

Let it be remarked, however, about each of these divisions, that it embraces matters of strict obligation, but also such as are not so binding, or, as we

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call them, matters of devotion. Thus, the first division (Part II.) is not confined to explaining what is *de fide*, as we say—that is, doctrines which are certainly revealed, and are taught by the Church as strictly necessary for all who would be saved—but also such things as are generally taught and believed in the Church, but not strictly defined as matters of faith. So the second division (Part III.) speaks not merely of matters of strict obligation, like the Commandments of God and the precepts of the Church, but also of the spiritual life, of the virtues and counsels of perfection, and of good works—matters that are closely connected with the Commandments, and rules for those that would be perfect; yet the non-observance of which is not necessarily a sin. And the third division, in like manner, treats not merely of the means of Grace that are of Divine institution and of strict necessity, but also of some which are neither of Divine institution nor of universal obligation, but instituted, or at least encouraged, by the Church as lesser means of Grace, preparations for its attainment, or aids to devotion; and which are often called sacramentals.

I wish to observe with respect to these two kinds of subjects in each division, that (I) it is of practical consequence that young people should go forth into the world so well instructed as to be able to distinguish between matters of strict obligation and that which is merely the ordinary belief or practice of good Christians, and the devotions they

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make use of. For in the present day of inquiry into everything, and of difficulties, objections, doubts, and disbelief, it is of first importance for our own security and peace of mind, as well as for the sake of instructing others, that we should know what is of obligation in faith and practice, and what is not so. (2) On the other hand, it is just as important that in our own practice, and that which we inculcate on others, we should shun as a hateful spirit the disposition to believe, or to obey, or to practise just so much as we are obliged, and no more. It is a thing that puzzles, and often really scandalises, those outside the Church, and discourages those in it, when they hear Catholics speak or see them act as if they studied how little they could believe and practise, without losing their souls. The spirit of a Christian is to go along with the Church and with good Catholics to the full, both in belief and practice.

**Method of Teaching.**—It may not be out of place to make two or three suggestions on the subject of giving religious instruction in such a way as to secure its being known intelligently. The progress made in the art of teaching during the last forty years is such that learning is now an easy and pleasant thing, compared at least with what it used to be. All that we want is that the method, skill, good sense, and patience that are exercised in teaching other subjects should be brought to bear on this. (1) Religious knowledge, like other sub-

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jects, requires to have a sufficient time set apart for its attainment, when those who are to learn it are all present and in condition to attend to it. (2) It requires, like other subjects, that those who are learning should be kept in such order and strict attention to their work, that all are taking in what is said to them, and not merely those who put themselves forward. It is the timid, the dull, the backward and neglected who require special and individual attention. (3) The attention, however, of children cannot be sustained by fear or force—they must be interested in what they learn; and this interest is more easily secured by making the subject easy, and bringing it down to the level of their understanding. The teacher must first come down to the child's ideas before he can bring the child up to the level of his own. He should avoid hard words and technical terms, using such expressions as are in common use among children, and illustrating his subject by what is familiar to them, and has a bearing on their daily life. Fresh knowledge is of itself interesting, and even exciting, if it is built on and connected with ideas already in the mind. (4) Teaching, to be successful, must not only be intelligible, but must be repeated until it is *thoroughly* known. How few even amongst grown-up and educated persons have the quickness to take in any new ideas at once! Most require, as they say, 'to think about it,' and it is only after doing so, and reading or hearing it again and again,

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that they have got it into their minds. Yet we often think children stupid who have not mastered a new idea after a single explanation. Mere repetition of words has not even any tendency to make the thing understood. The word may be imprinted in the memory, and the fact that it has the same meaning as another word, while the idea it represents remains entirely unknown. (5) When, however, the new idea is understood clearly, then, and not till then, is the memory to be exercised. Memory is the storehouse in which the mind lays up its ideas. But it cannot store up ideas till it has acquired them. Those who advocate furnishing the memory before the understanding are often unmindful that their own memory clings to what they learned in youth, for the very reason that their memories are alive with ideas and associations. It is these they love, and not the empty words and forms. But when careful simple instruction has awakened interest and intelligence, then the memory should be exercised in repeating and reproducing and bringing out the new idea, till it is familiar and lasting. (6) The amount of intelligence possessed on a subject is measured by the completeness of the knowledge, as well as its accuracy. By completeness is meant its being known in all its parts, and in its relationship to other things. True knowledge naturally grows, branching out in all directions into acquaintanceship with what is next to it. In this way the

knowledge connected with any single subject is practically limitless. And in Christian doctrine especially, each part has a real connection with every other part. The teacher cannot possibly teach it in all its aspects or relationships, but he can lead on the scholar to see their existence, and to be interested in exploring them. When this is attained, he is educated into desiring further knowledge, and knowing how to get it for himself. Knowledge when it has reached this stage cannot be lost or forgotten, for each part is linked to the others, and is a part of the framework of the very mind and character of the man.

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## Part the First.

### ON RELIGION IN GENERAL.



#### CHAPTER I.

##### NATURAL RELIGION : ITS MEANING AND FOUNDATION.

**Meaning of Religion.**—The word Religion is used in three or four different senses. It is most commonly used to mean acknowledging God and our duty to serve Him. All men do not acknowledge this duty ; but all ought to do so. For it is *natural* to do so. Nearly all people are brought up with some notion of God, which they have got by tradition or instruction. But supposing an ordinary man started by himself without any knowledge of God, yet if he used his senses, as we say, and would only think, he would come naturally to the conviction that there was some great invisible Being above him. For he would observe that he was placed in a world of great beauty, and one abundantly stored with things suited to his wants and tastes. The longer he lived, and the more he saw of Nature, the more would he be struck with the great variety of productions and creatures all about him, with the wonderful way in which they were constructed, and the harmony of all.<sup>1</sup> And the thought could not but come into his mind, How did these things come to be ?

<sup>1</sup> ' Natural reason alone tells us that there is a God, the Creator of heaven and earth. For if we had before us a very large and

How did I come to be? Who made me and them? No man can naturally think that things could come of themselves, or make themselves, for this reason, that we never saw anything make itself. We all of us have experience of living beings like ourselves, doing things, and making things, and moving other things that are not living; but what we call the *common sense* of people makes them think that things without life could not stir or do anything of themselves, and that it is impossible that things can grow of themselves, or make themselves.<sup>2</sup> How can they do anything before they exist? They must have been made or brought into being by some one that had life and reason like ourselves. And when a thing has been made it cannot act or move unless it has life. Men can do many things; but they cannot make things that did not exist before, nor can they make living things. They cannot make a plant, or flower, or a seed, or an insect, or an animal, because these things have what we call life in them. And as we cannot think that they made themselves, we come to be certain that there must be some much greater beings than ourselves, who created these things. But who created them? There must have been a beginning somewhere. And though we cannot

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beautiful palace, furnished with costly magnificence and adorned with exquisite taste, and some person boldly asserted that no one had built it or fitted it up with its furniture, should we not say he was mad? Now the world is that superb palace; the sun enlightens it by day, the moon by night; the heavens are studded with stars; the earth peopled by men, animals, and plants; the sea and the rivers by fishes; the air by birds; the seasons succeed each other in wonderful order; the bowels of the earth are stored with gold, silver, and precious stones and metals of every kind; and does not a world of so much richness and beauty and wonder proclaim the existence of a Lord who created and set it in order? (Balmez, *Easy Demonstration*.)

<sup>2</sup> 'It is He who made us, and not we ourselves' (Ps. xcix.).



get out of mystery or difficulty when we think on the subject of creation,—for indeed we know very little about it,—yet we get out of believing what we are sure is impossible, viz. that things come of themselves. Thus men have come to believe that there is some one living Being who was before all others, and who was the first Creator of all beings, the Highest and First. And this is whom we mean by God.<sup>3</sup> And religion means acknowledging God, bowing down before Him, and recognising our duty to serve Him. Nearly all the world agree in believing in God, though they have had very different notions about Him, and the way He ought to be served.

**Atheism.**—There are indeed Atheists—those, that is, who say there is no God; but it is seldom or never that a person is found who believes that no higher or greater being exists than himself. Such a belief would be too absurd.<sup>4</sup> What Atheists generally mean is, that there is no personal God—that is to say, one with a character and moral qualities, so as to love or care for His creatures; no one capable of entering into their feelings, or appreciating their desires. They say that the notion of such a God is taken from our own human conceptions, that it is making God to be like ourselves. But if God is not moved by our feelings, if He does not love and hate as we do, yet it does not follow that He has, so to speak, no feelings, no hatred, no love. He is not incapable of affections, though He is infinitely above our human affections. If God made affections and desires in us, He

<sup>3</sup> 'For every house is built by some man; but He that created all things is God' (Heb. iii. 4).

<sup>4</sup> 'The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God' (Ps. xiii.). Lord Bacon, the great founder of modern philosophy, says: 'I had rather believe all the fables of the legends, the Talmud, and the Alcoran than that this universal frame is without a mind' (*On Atheism*).

must be capable of understanding and entering into those affections. Just as His creating sound and the ear implies that He knows what hearing is, and His making light and the eye proves that He knows what seeing is.<sup>5</sup> It is absurd to suppose that we should owe our being to one who lacks some of the qualities that we possess. He has given nothing to us that He does not possess Himself. He is not below us and our affections, but above them. If we believe that God knows what He has created, and can enter into the feelings of His creatures, and is able to hear their cry of anguish or entreaty, this is to acknowledge the existence of a personal God.<sup>6</sup>

**Agnosticism and Scepticism.**—Besides those who disbelieve in the existence of God, or at least of a personal God, there are those who say that we know nothing about God. They do not deny His existence, but declare that we know nothing about the matter. And by this they mean, not merely that they or others do not know, but that nobody *can* know: this is called *Agnosticism*, which means being in ignorance. It means nearly the same as the older word *Scepticism*. A *Sceptic* is one who doubts about the truth of religion; but he does more than this—he thinks it right and reasonable to doubt. He maintains that we cannot be sure of anything except what we see and know; and that we cannot see God.

**Knowledge of God.**—However, the great bulk of men say that it is plain from Nature that there is a God. This is called *Natural Religion*. It is the religion which men may learn from Nature, or the world in which we live. It is the knowledge of God which is given to us by ‘the light of Nature,’ that is, by using the light of our

<sup>5</sup> ‘He that planted the ear, shall He not hear? or He that formed the eye, doth He not consider?’ (Ps. xciii. 9.)

<sup>6</sup> ‘He is nigh unto all that call on Him in truth’ (Ps. cxliv. 18).

natural reason on the world around us. Even if a man has not been instructed by his parents and brought up in the knowledge of God, he can know Him in some way by using his senses and reason. If he looks at the things around him and thinks, he will see that there is and must be a God over him, who made him and everything, and who supplies him with everything he enjoys. From this it follows (1) that man ought to know God, and (2) that when he does know Him he ought to adore Him. He ought to know God because he has got senses to observe things, and reason to reflect on them. Everybody uses his senses and his reason, or *power of reflection*, about himself and his own pursuits. Even animals learn things from what they see.<sup>7</sup> And so we cannot plead that we could not know anything about God. If we only choose to think, it will bring us to some knowledge of God. And it would seem that the only thing that can excuse a person from a guilty ignorance is his being in that state of brutish stupidity or idiocy that he never comes to see that he ought to think, nor rises above the state of an animal life. God has put the knowledge of Himself within our minds,<sup>8</sup> in the same way as He has put the knowledge of things of this life within our reach; both are within our reach, but neither is to be had without reflection and exertion.

**Fear of God.**—Secondly, as soon as ever we come to the knowledge of God, it becomes our duty to adore and serve Him. No one denies the duty of honouring a father. It is forced on us in our youth. It is a duty we

<sup>7</sup> 'The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel hath not known Me, and My people hath not understood' (Isaiah i.).

<sup>8</sup> 'He left not Himself without testimony, doing good from heaven, giving rains and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness' (Acts xiv. 16).

are every one of us made to recognise ; and directly a man sees that he has another Being over him who is still more the author of his existence, who is his Lord and Master in a still higher and greater degree than his earthly father is, and under whom he is still more absolutely and entirely in subjection, he cannot help feeling that he is bound to reverence and obey Him.<sup>9</sup> He is without excuse who acknowledges his subjection and duty to his earthly father, yet does not acknowledge his obligation to serve and adore the Supreme Father of all.

**Love of God.**—There is, moreover, another way in which the obligation of worshipping God is plain to the common sense of every one. To be grateful to those who do us good is a natural instinct, implanted not only in all races of men, but even in animals. If, then, we recognise the fact that all the good things of which the world is full, and which men are so eager to possess and enjoy, come from God as their author, that He has made them, and made them for us,<sup>10</sup> what excuse can we put forward for not being grateful to Him for His goodness to us, and showing that gratitude with our lips and in our lives? Men cry out against those who are ungrateful ; and ingratitude to our first and greatest Benefactor is still more unreasonable and wicked than ingratitude to men.

**Teaching of Nature.**—This is what is meant by Natural Religion, the knowledge of God and our duty to Him, which comes naturally from our using our reason on the world in which we find ourselves placed. Let us observe (1) that this Natural Religion is accessible to all men, (2) that it is the duty of all, and it is (3) at the

<sup>9</sup> 'The son honoureth his father, and the servant his master : if, then, I be a father, where is My honour ; and if I be a master, where is My fear? saith the Lord of Hosts' (Mal. i. 6).

<sup>10</sup> 'Behold, I have given them to you' (Gen. i.).

foundation of all religion, for men cannot believe in a revelation from God till they have first come to believe that there is a God.<sup>11</sup>

Natural Religion helps to explain that the heathen are not left without some light and knowledge to lead them to God and His service. There have been ages and countries of great darkness and ignorance, in which men did not know that their souls were immortal and that God would reward and punish men in another life. But still they were never entirely without the means of knowing God and their duty of serving Him; and those who faithfully acted up to this may have been rewarded by the gift of supernatural grace and an eternal reward, just as much as those who were faithful to greater knowledge and greater opportunities. The same disposition that will make a man love and serve God with little light will make him do so still more with much light.<sup>12</sup> In the early history of the Israelites we find little said about a future life. God led them to His service chiefly by the fear of immediate punishment or present reward. He tried and proved them by these lesser means to see if they would serve Him. Even if there had been no future life for them, or if they did not know of it, yet they were still bound to serve God as their Creator and Master and to love Him as their Benefactor. Agnostics and Infidels often speak as if we might do as we liked, if there were no future life. But what shows a man's bad heart and his unworthiness of God's mercy more than his being ready to give up God's love and service unless he will be eternally punished for it? Such is not the service that will win eternal life when a man does believe in it.

<sup>11</sup> 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is' (Heb. xi. 6).

<sup>12</sup> 'He that is faithful in little will be faithful also in much' (S. Luke xvi. 10).

**Teaching of Conscience.**—Our reason, then, reflecting on the external world of Nature, teaches us the existence of God, and leads us to fear and love Him. Even had we no other argument for doing so, and no knowledge of a future life, Natural Religion is of itself sufficient to teach us the duty of serving Him. But we have another very strong argument for the same conclusion if we turn our attention from the world without us to the observation of our own internal nature. For we all of us possess a sense or feeling within us which we call our conscience. Just as we have natural feelings of hatred, love, sympathy, compassion, so we have feelings that we ought to do some things and ought not to do others. It may be that conscience, like the other feelings we have mentioned, only comes into play by living with others, and so being forced by them to act with some regard to others as well as ourselves. Certainly all men, in whatever society they live, find themselves forced into the knowledge of some rules or laws, besides having the light of their own reason to teach them what is right; and when once we come to know a rule of right and wrong, our conscience comes in, first, as a dictate of our reason to suggest to us that the time is come when we have to act by this rule; and secondly, as a sense or feeling of satisfaction if we have acted in accordance with that dictate, or of compunction and discomfort if we have neglected to do so. A man may, indeed, learn to disregard these monitions and put down these feelings until at last they do not attract his attention. He may get accustomed to act in defiance of conscience as he may act in defiance of fear or pain; but he knows that he had it once until he put it down. And most persons are quite conscious of possessing it and being influenced by it. They have a secret feeling of discomfort, if they have not acted conscientiously.



Sometimes it is a fear of being found out, reprov'd, and punished. But when there is no fear of our fellow-men, yet still we are not comfortable. Our conscience, as this is called, reproaches us, and we are not easy in our minds. On the other hand, when a man perseveres in doing what he knows to be right, even though others do not see or approve of it, yet he has an inward sense of satisfaction and comfort because his conscience approves of him.<sup>13</sup> And the existence of this faculty or sense which is part of our nature, leads us not only to a present satisfaction or dissatisfaction, but also to some sort of expectation of good or evil, according to our deserts. Generally speaking, a man cannot go on in a course of selfishness, injustice, or disregard of others without a fear that he will, some day, and in some way or another, be found out and punished. Nor can a man persevere in virtuous self-denying or generous conduct without a *hope* sustaining him that his conduct will not in the end be unrewarded. How comes it that men have these hopes and fears? Who put them there? Who gave us the faculty and disposition of hoping and fearing? And do not these hopes and fears lead men to the conclusion that they are in the hands of God, that He who created them is still exercising a control over them and keeping them in His hands?

<sup>13</sup> 'Their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts within themselves accusing them or else defending them' (Rom. ii. 14).

## CHAPTER II.

### ON A FUTURE LIFE.

ARGUMENTS FOR IT; NOTHING DESTROYED; STATE OF ANIMALS;  
POWER OF GOD; END OF MAN; ARGUMENT FROM CONSCIENCE;  
FROM GENERAL BELIEF; AND FROM SACRIFICES MADE FOR  
THIS BELIEF.

**What Proof is there for it?**—But sometimes we hear men ask the question, What is the soul? How do we know that it is immortal? The animals have life and intelligence, some people even think that they have what we call reason; yet we do not believe that they have a future life. What proof is there that there is one for us any more than for them?

The principal and great proof is from Revelation. It is the Gospel that has brought this great truth into a clear light.<sup>1</sup> But those who disbelieve in the immortality of the soul and a future state do not believe in Revelation, and sometimes say they do not care for Revelation if they have no future life; so that we have to think what lesser proofs there are of this doctrine, besides the great one which comes from Revelation.

**Nothing is destroyed.**—Now one of the great discoveries which learned men are said to have made in the present day is that nothing is destroyed or comes to an end. Things change their form, as electricity shows itself as light at one time and heat at another, but the light and heat are not lost or destroyed. We lose sight

<sup>1</sup> 'Who hath enlightened life and incorruption by the Gospel'  
(2 Tim. i. 10).

or sense of them because they have taken another form, but that is all. Sometimes we can even find them in another form. Organised bodies like animals and vegetables which are made up of different substances may be dissolved and go to pieces, passing back into the simple elements of which they are made up. But nothing is lost or annihilated. Our bodies, indeed, which are part of ourselves, are dissolved in this way at death ; but besides the body we are each of us conscious of having a living, thinking, feeling being which is ourselves.<sup>2</sup> We are more sure of this than we are of anything in the world. If this inward soul is a real thing or substance, how can it come to an end any more than anything else? Why should there be any waste or loss in the spiritual any more than in the material world? It may take other forms perhaps, and be greatly changed,<sup>3</sup> but it must be the same thing after all. And if our soul was made up of elements or parts it might go to pieces and be dissolved into its elements. Now we do not know what it consists of or how it is made : that is true. But our souls are ourselves ; and as far as we can understand about ourselves and what we are, we are certain that we must be one and undivided. If we try to think of our souls being divided, we find we cannot do it ; we can only think of two or more different persons. If, then, the soul cannot be dissolved or divided, what should make us think that it is of a nature to come to an end, when we cannot find anything else that has such a nature?

**State of Animals compared with Man.**—As to animals, if we knew that they came to an end and had no future life, that would be a reason for thinking that we

<sup>2</sup> 'In death we see something going out, disappearing from sight, something not identical, but distinct from the body' (McCosh).

<sup>3</sup> 'We shall be changed' (1 Cor. xv. 52).

might be like them. But we do not know this ; and we do not know whether their souls are anything like ours. We have got bodies as they have, and so our bodies can die as theirs can. We have got feelings and instincts and passions as they have, and so far we are like them and do like them. But we are conscious of having also a thinking Reason, a power of understanding and of willing, and of acting according to our understanding, which is very different from what they show. We cannot see that animals even seem to want anything higher and greater than this life, but men very often feel and desire this. We feel that we have energies and capacities far beyond what find scope in this life, so that even if we knew that animals had no future life in any other shape or form, which we do not know, this would not be a good reason for thinking that we have none. What is there, then, to make us think that we shall not go on living hereafter ?

**Power of God to make Men immortal.**—But even if the nature which God has given us was the same as the nature of animals, so that if we were left to ourselves, so to speak, we should die as they do, and if they come to an end, so should we ; yet God, who made both them and us, can do as He pleases, and can make us immortal if He likes to do so. And there is a good reason why He might make a great difference between us and animals. For they live only for themselves, following the impulse of their own passions and feelings.<sup>4</sup> They cannot know or love God or live for Him. But man can rise to the idea of God, and know Him so as to love Him ; and there are vast multitudes of men who have sacrificed their own pleasure and comfort, and even their life, for the sake of proving their love to God. Is it not natural to suppose

<sup>4</sup> Some great modern writers contend that they are mere machines, and have no power of acting, except on impulse.

that God would do more for them than for creatures who live only for themselves? We know what we should do for those who loved us, and whom we loved, if we were able. And God is able to do as He will; and in making this world as He has done, and giving it to us, He has shown a great value for us and love to us.

**End and Object of Man.**—Another argument for believing that we shall live hereafter is, that we cannot see what we were made for, unless it is for a future life. We can see what other things were made for: we know the use of different sorts of plants and animals, how they support and sustain one another, and all of them are left in the hands of man; he can use them, or multiply or decrease them as he likes.<sup>5</sup> The whole world is given to man, and is for him. He is lord and master of it. But what is man for? What is his use? Why did the Creator of the world make so great and beautiful a home for him, and furnish it so richly, and then put him in possession of it? Why does He take so much care of him?<sup>6</sup> Is it for nothing? We do not suppose that anything else is made for nothing; why should that which is greatest be made for nothing? Yet we cannot see that he is of any particular use or fulfils any purpose in this world. Naturally, then, we are led to think that he is intended for some higher purpose in a future life, and that this world is for man but a sort of nursery with its playthings, in which to rear our souls to a higher use or purpose in a future stage of our being.

**Argument from Conscience.**—Conscience has been

<sup>5</sup> Gen. i. 28.

<sup>6</sup> 'Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him? Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast subjected all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, moreover, the beasts also of the field, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the sea' (Ps. viii.).

already spoken of as inward light helping us to see what we ought to do and not to do. But we know that conscience is also accompanied with a kind of fear and dread of consequences when we disobey its voice ; or, on the other hand, a hope and confidence of being rewarded when we obey it. Even when men go on for a long time in one course without these consequences coming, yet the dread or the hope continues, often so strongly as to make them miserable in the midst of prosperity, or cheerful under trial and adversity. These feelings of apprehension and expectation have been so strong and general amongst men, that they had great effect in making them believe that there is a future life, in which men will be treated according to their deserts. There is a kind of secret conviction that they are being watched and overlooked, and in the end will be treated as they deserve, that things will not end here.

**General Belief of Mankind.**—These arguments are not, indeed, complete and decisive proofs of a future life, but they are very strong reasons for believing it. This is clear from the fact that the great majority of men all over the world have some sort of belief in a future life. So that it cannot be regarded as an incredible or improbable thing. There have, indeed, been times of great ignorance ; and there are now savage tribes of men in out-of-the-way parts who seem to have little or no belief in a future state. But if we take the history of the most enlightened periods and the most cultivated races, we shall find that this belief has been general. The biographies of the greatest scholars and most distinguished men show, with but few exceptions, that they looked forward to a future life. Can we think that we know better and can see farther than they did? The world, at all events, looks up to and trusts their good



sense and intelligence more than it trusts the few people who disbelieve this doctrine.

**Men's Self-sacrifice for it.**—Lastly: besides the general belief of mankind, there is the *fact* before our eyes of a great many of the very best people living on this belief now and sacrificing their lives for it. We see in every class and description of men and women—rich and poor, educated and ignorant, civilised and uncivilised—those who, because they believe in a future life, give up the enjoyments of this. They order their every-day actions with a view to it. They do many things and suffer many things on account of it. They seem more contented and happy than others. Are they all under a delusion from which they have not sense to escape? How is it to be accounted for that they do not wake up to see their folly and join the infidel in enjoying the pleasures of sin for a time?<sup>7</sup> ‘If in this life only we have hope,’ S. Paul says, ‘we are of all men most miserable.’<sup>8</sup> Yet those of whom we speak cannot be persuaded by any inducement to give up the hope of eternal life. They have an inward light and strong conviction in their hearts that they are not following an illusion, but a reality.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Heb. xi. 25.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 19.

<sup>9</sup> ‘For we have not, by following artificial fables, made known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ’ (2 S Peter i. 16).

## CHAPTER III.

### SUPERNATURAL RELIGION.

MEANING; IN WHAT IT CONSISTS: SUPERNATURAL LIGHT; SUPERNATURAL LIFE; SUPERNATURAL HELP; SUPERNATURAL REWARD.

**Meaning.**—There are two ways in which we may come to know God. One is by the same means by which men learn Natural Sciences—by observing facts and bringing out the conclusions to which those facts obviously point. We may, as has been shown, learn to know something of God and our duty to Him in this way, which is called Natural Religion, or the Religion which we learn from Nature and in a natural way. God might have made the world and us, and left us to ourselves to find Him out as we could from Nature. It seems that in some past ages, and even now, in some parts of the world, men have been left without any other light to guide them than the light and law of Nature. But He has not left men in general without any other light. Besides the light of Nature, He has given to men the light of Revelation;<sup>1</sup> that is to say, He has revealed and made known to men (1) the truths which Natural Religion teaches, so that they could know them more easily, more quickly, and more plainly than they could by means of Natural Religion. And (2) He has revealed other truths which we could not have discovered from Natural Religion, so that we can know a great deal more above and beyond what we could learn from Nature.

<sup>1</sup> 'That was the True Light, that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world' (S. John i. 9).

**Its Character.**—The knowledge we obtain in this way, not by our own reasoning, but by what God has revealed to us, is therefore called Supernatural Knowledge, *i.e.* above natural; and the religion that is founded on it is called Supernatural Religion. Supernatural religion is not contrary to natural religion, but it differs from it in two ways. First, it tells us more than natural religion does; and secondly, it tells it us in a different way. We learn the truths of natural religion by the exercise of our reason. We learn the truths of supernatural religion by submitting our reason to the teaching of a Divine message or authority. Natural religion teaches us from what we can see. Supernatural religion is founded on what we hear or learn from another.<sup>2</sup>

**Supernatural Light.**—Supernatural Religion consists first of this Supernatural Light, which is commonly called Revelation. By it we learn a great deal more, and more clearly, than by Natural Religion. But it is important to bear in mind what kind of truths it is that God has revealed to us. It is not matters of speculation, but those things that concern the service of God,—what we have to do. God has seen fit to leave us in the dark as regards many subjects which do not immediately concern us, or which are too high for us. If we attempt to penetrate such mysteries as how God governs the world, why He does this, and why He does not do that, and to speculate on the wisdom and justice of His dealings with men, we shall only be puzzled and confused, and perhaps become weakened in faith. There are many questions for which no solution can be found either in Reason or Revelation. What has been made known to us are the

<sup>2</sup> 'Faith is the conviction of things that appear not' (Heb. xi. 1).

things that concern our own doings and not those of God.<sup>3</sup>

**Supernatural Life.**—This supernatural knowledge has been given to us for the practical purpose of teaching us how to live a supernatural life. This is the second thing in which Supernatural Religion consists. Left to ourselves, we should lead a natural life; we should do what we feel inclined to do, and seek to gratify our tastes, feelings, and passions. As men say, it is not natural to deny ourselves and go without the things that our nature itself calls for. Nor is it. We are not made to fly, but to walk. But Supernatural Religion teaches us to live a *supernatural* life; that is, to rise above nature, and to give up a portion of our natural desires and affections in order to live a spiritual life. It is because we have souls or spirits added on to our animal nature that we are able to live a spiritual life. And so it is not quite true to say that it is *unnatural*, but it is quite true to say that it is *supernatural*, for in order to do it we must rise above our animal nature, which is a real part of ourselves.

**Supernatural Help.**—Now we cannot do this of ourselves. We require some one, outside of us, as it were, to lift us above our nature and start us. And when we are started and have learned the use of our own wings, we require continual support to keep us up. Yet we cannot get this support by our own exertions or at our

<sup>3</sup> ‘Secret things (belong) to the Lord our God; things that are manifest to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law’ (Deut. xxix. 29).

‘All things of His Divine power which appertain to life and piety are given us’ (2 S. Peter i. 3).

‘There are some who do not approach Thee in a simple spirit, but are carried away by a self-sufficient spirit of curiosity, desiring to know the hidden and deep things of God, while they neglect what belongs to themselves and their own salvation’ (*Imitation*, Book III. ch. iv.).

own discretion. It is not a part of our natural powers. It is above them ; something higher and greater ; and so it is called supernatural help. God, who calls us by Revelation to live a supernatural life, provides for us those helps and graces which are necessary to enable us to live this life.

**Supernatural Reward.**—Lastly, if Supernatural Religion calls on us to live a supernatural life, it also puts before us a supernatural reward for doing so. When we think of the life of others and of ourselves, it sometimes seems as if we were fitted for this world, its occupations and enjoyments ; but as if we were not equal to being like the angels, and living for ever in the presence of God. It is too high for us, and naturally we are not equal to it. It is more than a natural reward. It is one above and far higher than our present notions and desires. We cannot grasp the idea of eternal happiness. But it is to fit us for a supernatural reward that we are enlightened with supernatural light, and called to lead a supernatural life, and assisted with supernatural helps.

**Division of the Subject.**—From this it appears that the subject of Christian Doctrine naturally divides itself, as in the Catechism, into three parts. As Supernatural Religion must be founded on Supernatural Knowledge, the first part is concerned with this knowledge. It treats of Faith,—*what we must believe* in order to be saved. But as knowing God is of no use without serving Him, the second part is on Christian Practice,—*what we must do* in order to be saved. And the third part is concerned with the Sacraments and Prayer, as *the chief means* of obtaining that supernatural assistance without which we cannot do what is necessary to obtain a supernatural reward.

## CHAPTER IV.

### ON FAITH.

ITS MEANING ; A THEOLOGICAL VIRTUE ; IMPLICIT AND  
EXPLICIT FAITH ; NECESSITY OF FAITH.

**Meaning of Faith.**—It has been explained that the supernatural knowledge that God has revealed to men depends on faith. We know God by faith. Faith means ‘to believe.’ The Apostles’ Creed begins with the words ‘I believe.’ But what does to ‘believe’ mean? Often we mean by it that we *think* something to be true, but we are not sure; as when we say, ‘I believe so.’ This is not the meaning here. Sometimes we use the word ‘believe’ in contrast to the word ‘to know,’ making a distinction between things we know ourselves and things that we learn from others. Now it is true that we do not know supernatural truth by ourselves, but from what God has made known to us; so that the expression used here, ‘I believe in God,’ not only means ‘I am firmly convinced that God exists,’ but it also expresses a belief in Him as the source of revealed truth. I have a firm conviction, a certain knowledge, of whatever He tells me. I am more sure of it than if I learned it by my own reason, because I am sure of His being right in a way that I could not be sure of my own judgment. Just as a child relies on the word of his father much more confidently than he does on his own ideas.<sup>1</sup> Faith is belief, but a firm unwavering belief, so that we say with truth that we *know* supernatural truths by faith.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Amen I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter into it’ (S. Mark x. 15).

**A Theological Virtue.**—Faith means belief; but in Christian doctrine it means a particular sort of belief, *i.e.* a firm belief or conviction, because it is a belief not in a man who might be mistaken in what he said, or who might be deceiving us, but in God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived.<sup>2</sup> It is because Faith means a *belief in God* that it is called a Theological Virtue, or a virtue that relates to God, and is exercised towards Him. And it is called a Supernatural Virtue because it is concerned about supernatural truths, and also because the first beginning or seed of it is given to us by God. And so we hear men speak of the ‘gift’ of Faith, and of its being an *infused virtue*, poured into, or implanted in, the soul by God. We can see, too, that Faith does not mean believing this *thing* or that; but believing that God has spoken and told us things, and believing whatever He has said. If you believe thoroughly in a person, you cannot believe one thing that he tells you and not another. Directly you can pick and choose what you believe, you show that you believe the things on the ground of your own reason, and not because some one who knows better than you do has told them to you. So that a man who has Faith believes everything that he has good reason to think that God has said. This is the meaning of Faith being *entire*. It is believing whatever God has revealed.

**Implicit and Explicit Faith.**—We see from this that it is, of course, quite possible for a person to have a true and firm belief in God, and whatever He has revealed, and yet not to have studied and learned up all the different things that God has revealed. Such a person believes, as we say, implicitly everything that God has said, so far and as soon as he knows it. And this is the sort of faith that most persons have; for there are not

<sup>2</sup> ‘God who lieth not’ (Titus i. 2).



many who are so well instructed as to have a complete and accurate, or as we call it, explicit, knowledge of each particular thing that God has revealed. To believe whatever God has revealed, without knowing what those things are, is called *Implicit* Faith. To believe things that God has revealed, knowing what those things are, is called *Explicit* Faith.

**Necessity of Faith.**—To have faith, that is to believe, in God's word, and what He has revealed, is the first requisite of Religion. Supernatural Religion is based on it. The Scriptures speak very clearly on this point: 'Without Faith it is impossible to please God.'<sup>3</sup> When it is said that Faith is necessary, it is not a question of the strength or amount of Faith, but of its being true and real Faith. An opinion, however strong, is not faith. And believing one doctrine taught by the Church and wilfully disbelieving another, is not compatible with faith, for it shows that our belief is founded on our own judgment, and not on the word of God. And it is not necessary for salvation that we should have Explicit Faith about everything. Indeed, we all have to begin with Implicit Faith, believing in whatever God makes known to us, whatever it is. But the Church teaches that we must go on to learn some things explicitly, viz. that there is one God in three Persons, who will reward the good and punish the wicked; that the second Person became man and died for us, and rose again. These great truths are at the foundation of Religion. This, therefore, is the Faith that is necessary to salvation. But by the first Commandment we are bound to keep up and cultivate this beginning of faith, and to learn and know the truths taught us by God.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Heb. xi. 6.    <sup>4</sup> 'Increasing in the knowledge of God' (Col. i. 10).

## CHAPTER V.

### ON REVELATION.

BY A VOICE ; BY ANGELS ; PROPHETS ; BY OUR LORD HIMSELF ;  
THROUGH THE CHURCH ; THE PRINCIPAL TRUTHS ; THE  
CREEDS.

FAITH is founded on revelation. We believe that God at different times made things known to men ; and if we believe this we also believe the things He has said. But in what way has He revealed things ? When did He speak, and how ?

**By a Voice.**—He has done so at various times and in different ways. We read in the earliest chapters of the Bible of God Himself speaking to Adam and to some of the other Patriarchs. Thus Adam heard the voice of God from amidst the trees of the Garden. God spoke to Moses from out of the burning bush, and the children of Israel heard His voice speaking the ten Commandments in the midst of thunder and lightning and thick clouds on Mount Sinai. God called Samuel when he was a child, and at first he thought it was the high-priest Heli speaking to him. S. Paul was converted by a voice from heaven, which others heard as well as himself. More frequently God seems to have spoken by a secret voice, yet so clearly that men could not misunderstand it.

**By Angels.**—Later on there are many examples of God's making known His will to men by Angels. Three angels appeared to Abraham and revealed to him the destruction of Sodom, and that he should have a son, in whom all the nations of the world should be blessed. The Law of Moses was given through the ministry of

angels.<sup>1</sup> An archangel foretold to Daniel the coming of the Messiah, and the exact time of it. The same archangel announced to the Blessed Virgin that the Child who was to be born of her was the Son of God. It was an angel who instructed Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, what he was to do.<sup>2</sup> While, however, God taught His own people by angels, He does not seem to have used their ministry in the same way to the heathen, but to have revealed things to them according to their own ways and ideas,—by signs, by dreams, and by stars. Thus the Wise Men were led by a star and warned in a dream that Herod wanted to destroy the Child, but the same thing was told to S. Joseph by an angel. The Philistines found out the will of God about the Ark by leaving it to the oxen to take their own way. The sailors cast lots to find out who had offended God, and the lot was made to fall on Jonas. God turned their superstitious belief to good account.

**By the Prophets.**—Another way in which God revealed His will to men was by means of men who were moved and inspired by God to say and do divers things in His Name. They were called Prophets, because God commonly made it manifest that He had sent them by His giving them power to foretell coming events, or to make known secrets, and sometimes by their being able to work other miracles. The Prophets were sent to warn and preach not only amongst the people of God, but also amongst heathens, schismatics, and idolaters. Elias was sent to the idolatrous King of Israel. Eliseus was told to make Hazael King of Syria. Jonas was sent to warn the Ninevites, and Nahum prophesied to them. Some of the judges were inspired to do extraordinary things. Some of the kings were inspired by God to make known

<sup>1</sup> Acts vii. 53.

<sup>2</sup> Acts x.

great truths to men and to foretell future events. And they and other inspired men left writings which were collected together by Samuel, Esdras, and others; and this collection of inspired writings became a great repository of what God had from time to time revealed. Whatever God had revealed or said to man was called *the word of God*, and so the Bible is called *the written word of God*; though in the earliest times men learned what God had revealed more by handing down the knowledge of it from one to another, or what is called *tradition*.

By our Lord Himself.—In these different ways God taught men, and the knowledge of God and of His will grew and increased. But in those times of darkness and difficulty the light of tradition was not very clear, nor could it be got at easily and by every one. It was mixed up with a great deal that was human and imperfect, through the ignorance and weakness and wickedness of the times. It was for the most part only revealed to one nation. And even that nation seems every now and then to have forgotten most of it.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, what God had revealed for the good of men's souls came to be so much mixed up with human knowledge and human ways of speaking, that it was difficult to distinguish between the two. Men in those days—even good men—could only see things dimly, like men in the dark. And so God took compassion on them and gave them a new revelation, which was so much more full and clear than all former revelations that it was like light to darkness.<sup>4</sup> This was by Himself

<sup>3</sup> In the reign of Josias, the Book of the Law was discovered after being apparently lost for some time (Jer. vi., Par. xxxiv. 14).

<sup>4</sup> Simeon spoke of our Lord in the Temple as a Light for a revelation of the Gentiles (S. Luke ii. 32). S. John says of Him, 'That was the true Light that enlighteneth every man coming into this world' (S. John i.). And our Lord more than once speaks of Himself as the Light of the world (S. John ix. 5, xii. 46).

coming into the world and instructing men in the way of salvation. 'God, having spoken on divers occasions and many ways in times past to the fathers by the Prophets, last of all in these days hath spoken to us by His Son.'<sup>5</sup> 'For us men and for our salvation,' the Nicene Creed says, 'He came down from heaven.' And so, making Himself as one of us, He showed us by His own example the way to eternal life. He instructed us in the truth respecting God and spiritual things, and put before us the hope and promise of eternal life.<sup>6</sup>

**Through the Church.**—And here we must take care to observe that as the revelations that came before our Lord led up to Him, so all that we enjoy now is derived from Him. For our Lord not only gave instruction in religious knowledge Himself, but He provided that the doctrine He taught should be preserved and handed down to future generations; so that men might always continue to enjoy the blessing which He brought down from heaven of being able to know easily, clearly, and with certainty what is necessary for the salvation of their souls. The Patriarchs, and those who lived under the Old Law, learned it by the promises of God, by types, by the messages of Angels, and the teaching of the Prophets, till our Lord came, who taught it Himself. And now that our Lord has ascended into heaven, we still have this teaching in the Church, which He set up for the very purpose of preserving and enforcing it.

All this teaches us that in whatever way God makes known His will to us, we are bound to obey Him. As He has revealed things in many different ways in past times, so He may lead men in different ways now. Whenever we have reason to think that God is leading us by

<sup>5</sup> Heb. i.

<sup>6</sup> 'I am the way, the truth, and the life' (S. John xiv. 6).

some message, or warning, or inspiration, in whatever way it may come, we should endeavour to be faithful in obeying it. Sara was reprov'd by the angels because she doubted their word. 'Is anything too hard for God?' they said. Zachary was struck dumb because he believed not the message God sent him. Our Lord Himself reprov'd S. Thomas, because he believed not the Apostles when they said that Christ had risen. On the other hand the Wise Men acted at once on the sight of the star and on the warning of the dream, believing that it was God who was leading them; and S. Joseph set the example of a holy man in acting at once in obedience to the directions of the angel who appeared to him in his sleep.

**The Principal Truths of Revelation.**—By faith we believe whatever God has revealed; and He has revealed a great many things. But there are some of the things so revealed that are of special consequence for us to know explicitly as a foundation and preparation for future knowledge and for practice. Until men know that there is One God, Who made them and knows what they do, and will reward them if they do good, and punish them if they do evil,<sup>7</sup> they have no reason or motive to attend to their souls; and unless they know that there are three Persons in God, and that the second Person became man and died for them, and that they can be saved by His Blood, they will not try to be saved. So these four truths are called the *four necessary truths*. Every one is bound to know them. No one can ordinarily be admitted to any Sacrament except Baptism until he has been instructed in them.

**The Apostles' Creed.**—But every Christian ought, if

<sup>7</sup> 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder of them that seek Him' (Heb. xi. 6).

possible, to know a great deal more than this. When the Apostles went forth to preach to the world, they instructed those who were converted, teaching them the most essential truths of Revelation to begin with. And these form what we call the Apostles' Creed. It is believed that the twelve Apostles, before separating to preach the Gospel, composed this Creed with its twelve articles ; but whether this is so or not, at least it is certain that they taught the truths contained in these articles. And from their time to this men have been taught the Apostles' doctrine as it is found in this Creed, and have persevered in it.<sup>8</sup> The word 'Creed' is taken from the first word of the Creed, in Latin *Credo*. But the name commonly given in old times to the Creed was *Symbol*, as the profession of the Faith was considered, like the sign of the Cross, to be a mark or sign of a Christian.

**The Nicene Creed.**—The Apostles' Creed, then, is the first and simplest form of a Christian's belief, containing, as it does, the chief things that God has revealed. But besides the Apostles' Creed there are three other Creeds authorised by the Church—the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, and the Creed of Pope Pius IV. Of course these three Creeds do not teach any different doctrine from that which is contained in the Apostles' Creed ; but they teach some parts of that doctrine more definitely and explicitly. For at different times there rose up persons who denied some article of Faith contained in the Creed of the Apostles, or taught it in some different sense from that in which the Apostles taught it ; so that it became necessary for the rulers of the Church to decide the true sense, and lay down or *define*, as it is

<sup>8</sup> 'They were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles' (Acts ii. 42).



called, the real doctrine that had been taught by our Lord to His Apostles. Thus when Arius, and other heretics in the fourth century, tried to explain away our Lord's Divine Nature, the Bishops met together at Nice, in Bithynia, and, after discussion, laid down the true doctrine of the Apostles' Creed more clearly and fully; and this Creed, which consists of the Apostles' Creed, with some additions and explanations, is therefore called the Nicene Creed. It is said in the Mass by the priest after the Gospel on Sundays and most of the great festivals; and it is very useful to read and study it, as it explains more fully some articles of the Apostles' Creed.

**The Athanasian Creed.**—This Creed is so called after S. Athanasius, the great doctor of the Church, who spent his life in contending against the Arian heresy, and in defending the Divinity of our Lord. It was not exactly made by him; but it contains his defence and explanation of this doctrine, and something on other doctrines that were attacked after his time. It is recited by priests in the Breviary Office for Sundays.

**Creed of Pope Pius.**—The Creed of Pope Pius was drawn up after the Council of Trent. It begins with the Nicene Creed, and goes on to define certain doctrines of the Church which were attacked by Luther and the Reformers in the sixteenth century. The Bishops and Fathers of the Church met in General Council at Trent, in the Tyrol, in the year 1545, and at the end they drew up a summary of what they had defined. This was done in the year 1563, under Pope Pius IV., and was ratified by him, and the Creed is therefore called by his name.

Part the Second.  
ON THE CREED.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST ARTICLE: GOD IN HIMSELF.

MEANING; GOD SELF-EXISTENT; A SPIRIT; ONE IN SUBSTANCE;  
THREE IN PERSONS; SIMILITUDES.

**Meaning.**—The word God is derived from Good, and means the Sovereign, Supreme, or Highest Good, *the Good One*. Men can see by their reason that there must be a Supreme Being, and so Revelation does not so much teach this as refer to it and suppose it. For, indeed, before we can receive Revelation, we must believe that there is a God to reveal things. But Revelation has told us some things about God which we could not have discovered by reason. Before considering what God has done, let us consider what we know of the Nature of God in Himself.

**Self-existent.**—We cannot understand the Nature of God, for He is incomprehensible and infinite; but there are certain truths about God's Nature which both Reason and Revelation teach us. The primary notion of God is, that He is the Being *who exists of Himself*; which means that, whereas everything else was created, and there was a time when it did not exist, He was never created. He always existed. All things else depend on Him. He

depends on no one. What we mean by God is, the Being that was from all eternity, and is the First Cause, or Cause of everything else. We cannot reason on the subject without saying to ourselves that there must be some eternal Being who is before and above all other Beings, self-existent. And Revelation gives us the same idea of God. When God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, and told him to go with a message to the Israelites, Moses asked who he was to say that God was ; and God answered him, '*I am Who am.*' Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel: *He Who is* hath sent me to you.<sup>1</sup> And the Catechism says, in answer to the question, What is God? that *He alone exists of Himself.*

**A Spirit.**—Every one understands what is meant by a living Being existing, because we are living beings ourselves. But we experience that we are made of two substances different in character, body and spirit, and the highest is the spirit, which raises us above the nature of plants and brutes. Death shows us that the body is powerless and useless after the spirit has left it. So when the Catechism teaches us that God is a Spirit,<sup>2</sup> it is to guard against the low ideas of God which have prevailed amongst heathen nations or those debased by vice and ignorance. The Greeks and Romans represented their gods as being influenced by human passions. But God is not like, but unlike, us in our bodies and animal passions. Where we are like Him is in our souls. It is true that in the Holy Scriptures we find God spoken of as if He had bodily senses. King David speaks of the eyes of God being on us, and His ears being open to our

<sup>1</sup> And so our Lord, in asserting His Divine Nature, said, 'Before Abraham was made, I am' (S. John viii. 58).

<sup>2</sup> S. John iv. 24.

prayers, of His hands and outstretched arms. But this poetic and figurative language is used to suit our weak understanding. We cannot see except with eyes, nor hear except with ears ; God too has hearing and seeing, but of a kind infinitely *above* ours. We must get our first ideas of God's being from our own ; but we must study to raise our ideas from our own being to what God must be, and not to bring down the idea of God to what we are. We can understand that we are in many respects like animals, yet immensely superior to them ; so there are creatures immensely superior to us,—Spirits that are higher in intelligence, and possessing vast powers and faculties which we can understand as little as insects and fish can understand ours. But whatever number of Spirits or Beings of a higher kind there are, God is infinitely exalted above them all.

**One in Substance.**—Another thing that God has revealed to us about Himself is, that He is One. Our very notion of God would lead us to think that there could be only one God. Yet, somehow or another, a great proportion of the world have believed in religions which taught a plurality of gods. Even the Israelites, God's own people, through living among the Egyptians, who worshipped many gods, were always tempted to this error. They had to be warned against it in the strongest language,<sup>3</sup> and taught that God was jealous of any one being honoured as God, except Himself. And when the Apostles went about preaching amongst the heathen nations, this was one of the principal doctrines they had to insist on,—that 'though there be that are called gods many and lords many, yet for us (Christians) there is but one Lord.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord' (Deut. vi. 4).  
 'I alone am God' (Ps. lxxxv. 10).

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 6.

**Three in Persons.**—While, however, there is but one God, yet in this one Divine Essence or Substance there are three Persons,—the Father, the Son, who is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. Each one of these Persons is God; and yet there are not three Gods, but One. They have all the same perfections. One is not greater nor before another. This doctrine was taught clearly by our Lord, who sent out His Apostles to teach all nations, commanding them to baptise *in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost*. And when our Lord Himself was baptised, the three Divine Persons made Themselves manifest: God the Father speaking from heaven, and God the Holy Ghost descending in a visible form on God the Son made man. The Apostles' Creed teaches this doctrine, as in it we profess our belief, first in God the Father, secondly in God the Son, and thirdly in God the Holy Ghost. But it is more clearly and explicitly drawn out in the Athanasian Creed, which is in great part taken up with setting forth the doctrine of the Trinity. 'The Catholic Faith,' it says, 'is this, that in the Trinity we adore One God, and in the unity of God we adore the Trinity, neither confusing the Persons nor dividing the (One) Substance. For the Person of the Father is one, and the Person of the Son is another, and the Person of the Holy Ghost is yet another. Yet the Divine nature of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost is all one, Their glory equal, Their majesty coeternal. Whatever the Father is, the Son is also, and likewise the Holy Ghost. The Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Ghost is uncreated. The Father is infinite, the Son is infinite, the Holy Ghost is infinite. The Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Ghost is eternal. And yet there are not three eternal Beings,

but One; nor are there three uncreated or infinite Beings, but One who is uncreated and One who is infinite. The Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God. Yet there are not three Gods, but one God. For as we are obliged by the Christian truth to acknowledge each several Person to be God and Lord, so we are forbidden by the Catholic Faith to say that there are three Gods or three Lords. The Father is made of no one, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, nor created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. There is therefore one Father, not three; one Son, not three; one Holy Ghost, not three. And in this Trinity there is no before or after, no greater or less; but all the three Persons are co-eternal and coequal. So that in all things, as already said, the Unity is to be adored in the Trinity, and the Trinity in the Unity.'

**Similitudes.**—While, however, this is a certain truth revealed by God, it is one that is above our comprehension. Yet it is a mystery to which there is some sort of resemblance in our own souls, which, while they are each of them one and indivisible, nevertheless consist of will, affections, and intelligence, powers of a very different character and nature, yet indivisibly united in one being. But a more perfect emblem of the Blessed Trinity is seen in the sun, which sends forth light and heat. Each of these is distinct from the other, and has different effects; yet they are never separated, and cannot be separated, from each other or from the sun, which is the origin and head of the others. It is remarkable, too, that our Lord likens Himself to light, while God the Holy Ghost came down from heaven in the likeness of flames of fire.

## CHAPTER VII.

### GOD IN HIMSELF.

#### HIS PERFECTIONS ; ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES ; REVEALED ATTRIBUTES.

**God's Perfections.**—When the Catechism says that God made us to *know* Him, this does not mean only to know that God exists, but to know what His character is. What we mean by a person's character is the qualities which he has, and especially those which are strongest in him. So we come to know God's character by studying the qualities which He has. Only we do not call them qualities when we speak of God. For the qualities which we have are sometimes imperfect and sometimes bad. But the qualities which we attribute to God are all good and all perfect, and so they are sometimes called His *attributes*, but more commonly his *perfections*. The Catechism says that God is infinite in all perfections ; or that He possesses all good qualities in a perfect degree. God's nature and His character are, of course, far above our weak understanding.<sup>1</sup> God is *incomprehensible*. But we can know something about Him from what our reason tells us that God must be, and from what God has revealed to us about Himself ; and most of all, from learning what God has done, and thinking about it. For just as we understand a man's character best from observing what he does, so we best understand God's character

<sup>1</sup> 'Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me ; it is high, and I cannot reach it' (Ps. cxxxviii. 6).



from considering carefully what He has done, and His wonderful works among the children of men.<sup>2</sup>

**Almighty.**—The Creed only mentions one of God's perfections,—that He is omnipotent ; and it attributes this perfection to the first Person of the Blessed Trinity, God the Father Almighty. The reason for this is, (1) not that the Father possesses this perfection by Himself, or more than the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity, for They are, as we have seen, *equal in all perfections* ; but God the Father being the Head or Fountain from whom the other two Divine Persons proceed, this attribute is most commonly ascribed to Him as the Source of all perfection. And (2) this perfection of omnipotence includes all others, or at least implies them ; for what can be wanting to Him whose power is without any limit ? And so this, perhaps, may be the reason why this attribute only is spoken of in the Creed, because it is highest and greatest of the perfections of God, and includes all others.

**Essential Attributes of God.**—While the Creed, however, refers to only one of God's attributes, the Catechism speaks not only of God's being omnipotent, but of His being omnipresent, omniscient, and eternal. These, as we think of them, are the leading or essential attributes of God. When once we have learned that there is a Being who is before all, and above all, we see that He must in consequence have these four attributes. If God is He who is the highest and greatest above all things, and from whom everything else comes, He must be able to do what He pleases. There is no one over Him to resist Him. All things only exist because He made them, and continue to exist because He upholds them. How, then, can His power be limited ? The angel who

<sup>2</sup> Ps. cvi. 15.

came to Abraham to tell him his wife should have a son said to him, 'Is anything too hard for God?'<sup>3</sup> 'With God no word shall be impossible.'<sup>4</sup> In the same way that we see that God must be Almighty, we see that He must be eternal. He always existed; for who was before Him to create Him?<sup>5</sup> And He always will be, for what could put an end to Him? Since God exists of Himself, what could change Him?<sup>6</sup> So in the Apocalypse we read of our Lord saying to S. John, 'Fear not, I am the First and I am the Last; and behold, I am living for ever and ever.'<sup>7</sup> And as there was never any time when God was not, so there is no place in which He is not.<sup>8</sup> This is what is meant by saying that He is *Omnipresent*. God, as the Catechism says, is everywhere. God is said to be in heaven, because it is there that He is seen and shows His presence; but there is really no place in which He is not. As the fish in the sea live in the water, and are surrounded by it and move in it, and cannot escape from it, so, as S. Paul reminded the Athenians, 'He is not far from every one of us, for in Him we live and move and are.'<sup>9</sup> God is everywhere present, because (1) He fills heaven and earth;<sup>10</sup> (2) wherever anything is done it is by His power, which sustains and moves all things; and (3) this implies that He is present by His knowledge.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xviii. 4.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke i. 37.

<sup>5</sup> 'Before the mountains were made, or the earth and the world was, from eternity to eternity Thou art God' (Ps. lxxxix.).

<sup>6</sup> This is beautifully put by King David in the Psalms: 'In the beginning, O Lord, Thou didst found the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest; and they shall all grow old as doth a garment, and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art always the self-same, and Thy years shalt not fail' (Ps. ci.).

<sup>7</sup> Apoc. i. 7.

<sup>8</sup> 'If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art present' (Ps. cxxxviii. 8).

<sup>9</sup> Acts xvii. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Jer. xxiii. 24.

And so we say that God sees and knows all things, even our most secret thoughts, or that He is *Omniscient*. As we feel that we know of everything that is done in the room in which we live, so everything that is done is in the presence of God and before His eyes. For 'there is no creature invisible in His sight, for all things are naked and open in the eyes of Him.'<sup>11</sup> When we speak of living in God's presence, or putting ourselves in the presence of God, it means calling to mind this great truth,—that God sees and hears everything we do and say, and then acting as with this thought in our mind. So when we take an oath we call upon God, who sees and knows all things, to witness that what we say is in accordance with what He knows to be true.

**Revealed Attributes.**—But besides these attributes that form part of the idea and definition of God, there are other attributes that form the character of God as we see it in His works, or as He has made it known to us by Revelation. We can see that God is infinitely high and great; but we could not know of ourselves that He is also infinitely condescending, caring about the wants and feelings of His creatures in a way that we can only express by saying that He is infinitely humble, or that His greatness is of quite a different kind from that of earthly kings and emperors, who are afraid of letting themselves down, if they do not keep above and away from their subjects. If it is a true representation of God to describe Him as a great King seated on a throne of majesty and splendour, it is just as true that He is like a little child in simplicity, love, gentleness, and tenderness,<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Heb. iv. 13.

<sup>12</sup> 'For the Lord is high, and looketh on the low' (Ps. cxxxvii. 6). 'Thus saith the high and eminent one that inhabiteth eternity, and His name is Holy, who dwelleth in the high and holy place, and with a contrite and humble spirit' (Isai. lvii. 15).

making the world full of things to give us pleasure and delight and amusement, and showing sympathy for our feelings and indulgent compassion for our weaknesses. We might understand of ourselves that God must be infinitely just and holy,<sup>13</sup> as Scripture says that He is; but God has revealed to us that He is also infinitely merciful and long-suffering. We might see that He is immutable or unchanging.<sup>14</sup> But God has revealed to us what is more on the level of our understanding,—that He is ‘faithful’ to His promises to those who serve Him, and that it is impossible for God to lie.<sup>15</sup> For as a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him.<sup>16</sup>

To know God then, as the Catechism says we are bound to do, we have to study and think on the different things that our own Reason and Revelation tell about Him; and to meditate particularly on those perfections and attributes of His which make up His character, taking care, however, not to dwell exclusively on any one attribute, as His character does not consist of one perfection, but of all; and to dwell too much on one prevents us from attending to the rest.

<sup>13</sup> ‘Thou hast loved justice, and hated iniquity’ (Ps. xlii. 8).

<sup>14</sup> ‘I change not’ (Malach. iii. 6).

<sup>15</sup> Heb. vi. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Ps. cii. 13.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### 'I BELIEVE IN GOD.'

GOD IN HIS WORKS ; REASON OF CREATION ; MEANING OF  
CREATION ; VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

**Reason of Creation.**—We should form a very insufficient idea of God if we were to think of Him only as He is in Himself or in His perfections. We know little of God in this way compared with what we know of Him by His outward works,—what He has done to us and for us. Though God has no need of us<sup>1</sup> for His own good, but is infinitely happy in and by Himself, yet it is a part of His nature to diffuse, like the sun, His goodness and happiness to the creatures whom He has made. And so the Apostle S. John, speaking of God, does not say that God has love, or is loving, but he says *God is love.*<sup>2</sup> Love is that disposition and sentiment by which we leave ourselves, as it were, and throw our hearts on others. Now we see and experience in this world that those who are selfish and wrapt up in themselves do not become happy. The happiest people are those who are engaged in some pursuit or occupation with which they are taken up, thinking of something outside themselves, and caring for others more than themselves. This serves to help us to understand that God is, so to speak, unselfish, and that it is a part of His very nature to love His creatures and bestow His benefits on them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Thou hast no need of my goods' (Ps. xv. 1).

<sup>2</sup> 'God is charity' (1 John iv. 16).

<sup>3</sup> 'For Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things Thou hast made' (Wis. xi. 25).

**Meaning of Creation.**—This character of God it is that led to the creation of all things. For God living before all, there was nothing for Him to love but what He created. This is, so to speak, the end of creation. To create does not mean to make one thing out of another, as a carpenter makes a table out of wood ; but it means to make out of nothing—that is, to bring a thing into existence without there being anything to make it out of. There was nothing outside of God for things to be made of. All things came out of God. Whatever substance or qualities they possess come from God. God possesses these qualities in fulness and perfection ; but He has imparted some little portion of them to the things He has made. The strength or beauty or force or life we see in them is an emanation from the Source of all strength and life and beauty. It is He that gave and still maintains these qualities in them ; and He does not take them away even when they are abused or used against Himself.

**Visible and Invisible.**—Everything, then, owes its creation to God ; but of the things God has created, some are visible, so that we can see and examine them, and some are invisible, and we only know of their existence by inference of our own Reason or by Revelation. We can know this world and the things that are in it ; but, before God made man and put him into the world, He had already created the invisible beings that we call angels ; we will, therefore, speak first of these.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE CREATION OF ANGELS.

KINDS OF SPIRITS ; THEIR OCCUPATION ; EXECUTING GOD'S JUDGMENTS ; PROTECTING THE SERVANTS OF GOD ; ANGELS IN THE GOSPELS ; GUARDIAN ANGELS.

**Kinds of Spirits.**—The Nicene Creed speaks of God as Creator of all things, visible and invisible. We do not know for certain which of these two God created first ; perhaps they were created together ; but it is certain that He created spirits before He created man. We know of these spirits from God having sent them into the world as His ministers and messengers,<sup>1</sup> and so we commonly call them Angels, which signifies messengers ; but Holy Scripture in different places speaks of nine different kinds of spirits : Angels, Archangels, Virtues, Cherubim, Seraphim, Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, and Powers ; and it is common to call these different sorts of spirits the nine Choirs of Angels divided into three Hierarchies. However, very little has been revealed to us respecting these spirits,—what numbers of different spirits there are, what the special nature and office of each kind is, nor when they were created. Some persons have thought that what are called the forces of Nature are not merely blind powers that act without intelligence or consciousness, but spiritual beings, of entirely different nature from anything we have knowledge of, created by God to act as He has appointed them.<sup>2</sup> Certainly it is more easy

<sup>1</sup> 'Thou makest Thy angels spirits' (Ps. ciii. 4).

<sup>2</sup> 'You ministers of His that do His will' (Ps. cii. 21).



for us to understand that the forces of Nature should be living beings like ourselves than that they should be dead inanimate beings, without feeling or consciousness, yet acting of themselves. We have no idea or experience of *things* doing and acting, or being able to act, of themselves. Some of the names given to these different kinds of spirits seem to suggest something of their peculiar nature: Archangels, meaning those who are higher than, or set over, the Angels; Virtues, which suggest inward force and strength; Powers and Principalities, beings that have great rule and authority. The Seraphim are generally spoken of as beings characterised more specially by burning love, the Cherubim by immense knowledge.

**Their Occupation.**—We know, however, very little of the nature of these different kinds of spirits. Holy Scripture seldom speaks of any but angels, and so we have come to use the word for any of the different kinds of spirits. But in many places their occupation is spoken of. They are represented as standing round the throne of God, and living in His presence. When Zachary hesitated to believe the message of God, the Archangel said, ‘I am Gabriel, who stand before God.’<sup>3</sup> The Prophet Daniel, in his vision of the Ancient of Days, says, ‘Thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before Him.’<sup>4</sup> And our Lord says of the angels, that ‘they always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.’<sup>5</sup>

**Executing God's Judgments.**—They are also represented as attending God to carry out His will. In the Psalms they are described as ministers of God, to do His will. God's most terrible judgments on men were executed by angels. Adam and Eve were driven out of

<sup>3</sup> S. Luke i.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel vii. 10.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. xviii.

Paradise and prevented from reëntering by an angel with a flaming sword. The tenth plague inflicted on Egypt was the destruction of the first-born in every house by an angel. When a great army of the Assyrians besieged Jerusalem, Ezechias the king prayed earnestly to God for deliverance, and that night the angel of the Lord slew, in the camp of the Assyrians, 185,000 men.<sup>6</sup> When King Herod died of a dreadful disease, eaten by worms, it is said that the angel of God struck him.<sup>7</sup> When Heliodorus was driven out of the Temple and scourged, it was by two angels.<sup>8</sup>

**Protecting Servants of God.**—But angels have not been sent to punish men so much as to protect them. When Josue was going to enter the Promised Land ‘he lifted up his eyes, and saw a man standing over against him, holding a drawn sword; and he went to him and said, Art thou one of ours or of our adversaries? And he answered, No, but I am prince of the host of the Lord, and now I am come. And Josue fell flat on his face, worshipping him.’<sup>9</sup> When God was going to destroy the cities of the plain by fire, He sent angels to rescue Lot and his family. When the city of Dothan was besieged in order to apprehend Eliseus, and his servant was frightened, Eliseus prayed that God would open his eyes; and he saw an army of horses and chariots of fire round about the city to protect it. These were the angels of God.<sup>10</sup> ‘The three children who were cast into the furnace of fire were delivered by an angel;’<sup>11</sup> and when Daniel was cast into the lions’ den, he told the king that ‘God had sent His angel to shut the lions’ mouths, so that they had not hurt him.’<sup>12</sup> And in the Acts of the Apostles we read

<sup>6</sup> 4 Kings xix.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xii. 23.

<sup>8</sup> 2 Maccab. iii.

<sup>9</sup> Josue v. 14.

<sup>10</sup> 4 Kings vi.

<sup>11</sup> Dan iii.

<sup>12</sup> Dan. vi. 27.

of an angel who delivered the Apostles out of prison, and on another occasion S. Peter alone.<sup>13</sup>

**Angels in the Gospels.**—Then we find many instances of angels appearing in connection with the mysteries of our Lord's life. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Zachary to foretell the birth of S. John the Baptist, and afterwards to announce to the Blessed Virgin that she should have a son. When our Lord was born, angels brought the good tidings to the shepherds, who heard a multitude of the heavenly army singing *Gloria in Excelsis*. More than once an angel appeared to S. Joseph directing him where to take the Child and His Mother. Angels ministered to our Lord after He had been fasting in the desert, and when He was faint from agony in the Garden of Gethsemani. At His Resurrection an angel rolled back the stone from the sepulchre before the eyes of the soldiers that were guarding it, but who were paralysed with fear at the sight of him. Two more angels were seen by the holy women who visited the holy sepulchre. And when our Lord ascended into heaven, His Apostles saw two men in white garments, who were angels.

**Guardian Angels.**—But angels not only waited on our Lord, but God has appointed angels to watch over His servants on earth.<sup>14</sup> The Book of Tobias gives a detailed account of the way in which he was attended and guarded and directed by one whom he thought to be a man, but who, in the end, discovered himself to be 'the Angel Raphael, one of the seven who stand before God.'<sup>15</sup> Not only the members of Christ's Church are under the

<sup>13</sup> Acts xii. 23.

<sup>14</sup> 'Are they not all ministering spirits sent to minister to them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?' (Heb. i. 14.)

<sup>15</sup> Tob. xii. 15.

guardianship of angels generally, but it is universally believed that each one is specially watched over and attended by a particular angel, called therefore his Guardian Angel.<sup>16</sup> Our Lord seems to say as much when He tells us not to 'despise His little ones; for their angels in heaven always see the face of His Father, who is in heaven,' that is, stand in His presence.<sup>17</sup> And He teaches us that the angels fulfil this duty with love and interest in us, when He says that the 'angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner doing penance.'<sup>18</sup> One of the earliest types of the Church was Jacob's vision of a ladder reaching to heaven with angels ascending and descending on it,<sup>19</sup>—coming down to bring help and blessings from God, and returning to carry up the prayers and offerings of His servants.

<sup>16</sup> 'How great must be the dignity of our souls, that each one of us should have from his birth an angel deputed to watch over him!' (S. Jerome.)

<sup>17</sup> S. Matt. xviii.    <sup>18</sup> S. Luke xv. 10.    <sup>19</sup> Gen. xxviii. 12.

## CHAPTER X.

### FALLEN ANGELS OR DEVILS.

ACCOUNT OF THEIR FALL ; THEIR OCCUPATION ; THEIR POWER OF POSSESSION ; AND OF TEMPTATION.

**Account of their Fall.**—God Himself being infinitely good, all that He Himself makes cannot but be good. But God, as we see ourselves, gives us liberty. He leaves us a good deal to ourselves. We see that we possess liberty, which we can use as we like.<sup>1</sup> And we see that men often use this liberty very badly. It not unfrequently happens that those who have the highest qualities, and are distinguished for great beauty and high ability, become proud of themselves. They look down on others, and will not submit to do or to be like them, and thus others come to dislike and avoid them ; and those who might have done great things and have been the first and highest come to be the lowest and worst.<sup>2</sup> Now this which we so often see among ourselves happened among the angels. They were bright and beautiful creatures as God made them, endowed with higher qualities, and powers than anything we know of. But being so high they sought to be higher. They thought too much of themselves to submit to God and His holy will. We do not know anything for certain respecting the particular way in which these angels sinned. But it seems that one of the highest of them, whom we call Lucifer, or Satan, or *the Devil*, led the others by his example into

<sup>1</sup> 'He left him in the hand of his own counsel' (Ecclus. xv. 14).

<sup>2</sup> 'Pride is the beginning of all sin' (Ecclus. x. 15).

this sin of pride,<sup>3</sup> and therefore he and all who followed him were cast out from the presence of God, and 'their place was found no more in heaven.'<sup>4</sup> But whatever were the circumstances of their sin, it is quite certain that they fell from their condition as angels. S. Peter says that 'God spared not the angels that sinned; but, having cast them down into the place of torment, delivered them into the chains of hell to be reserved unto judgment.'<sup>5</sup> Our Lord Himself speaks of the place of everlasting punishment 'prepared for the devil and his angels.'<sup>6</sup>

**Their Occupation.**—The fallen angels being excluded for ever from the presence of God are filled with rage and despair. They cannot rest.<sup>7</sup> They are envious of us, as being made by God to enjoy the happiness of heaven, which they have lost. And so they do everything they can to mar the work of God in the world and in our souls, and to turn us away from serving God and gaining heaven. They are possessed of high powers and intelligence, and could easily prevail over us were they permitted to do so. But they seem to be restrained by what we allow them to do. They can lay snares for us and tempt us,

<sup>3</sup> This passage is thought to refer to the fall of the angels: 'How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning? How art thou fallen from the earth that didst wound the nations? And thou saidst in thy heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will ascend above the height of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit' (Isaias xiv. 12).

<sup>4</sup> Apoc. xii. 8.

<sup>5</sup> 2 S. Peter ii. 4. S. Jude says (v. 6): 'The angels who kept not their principality' (that is, their original dignity), 'but forsook their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness.'

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xxv. 41.

<sup>7</sup> 'When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, it walketh through desert places, seeking rest and not finding it' (S. Luke xi. 24).

and contrive evil for us, as the angels of God contrive our good ; but they cannot succeed except through our connivance or consent. They brought evil and misery into the world, but not until our first parents had consented to their temptation ; and this gave them an actual power in the world. In Holy Scripture Satan is not only called Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils and the Prince of Darkness, but our Lord calls him *the Prince of this world*, implying that he has a power in this world. And when the devil tempted our Lord, he claimed power over the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, to give them to whomsoever he would.<sup>8</sup> The history of Job is an account of the harm and mischief contrived by the devil against the servants of God in order to turn them from His service. The power of the devil to do mischief is described in the Book of Tobias. S. Peter says that he goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.<sup>9</sup>

**Their Power of Possession.**—This power of Satan and his evil spirits is not only on the world without, but on our souls within us. And this not merely by temptation, but sometimes by possession. We have many instances of this strange power of the evil spirits in Holy Scripture ; and one especially is mentioned in S. Luke's Gospel,<sup>10</sup> where the man was possessed by a great number of evil spirits, who gave him preternatural strength and spoke to our Lord through him ; and when they were cast out of the man, entered into a herd of swine and destroyed them. Our Lord, besides working many miracles Himself in casting out devils, also gave power to His Apostles to cast them out ; and He promised to continue this power in His Church.<sup>11</sup> Philip the deacon had this

<sup>8</sup> S. Luke iv. 6.

<sup>9</sup> 1 S. Peter v. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. viii.

<sup>11</sup> S. Mark xvi. 17.



power.<sup>12</sup> And from early times those who were possessed or thought to be possessed by evil spirits were *exorcised*—that is, they were adjured in Christ's name to leave the possessed person.<sup>13</sup> And now before a child is baptised exorcisms are said, in order to cast out any evil influence the devil may possess over the unbaptised person.

**And of Temptation.**—We must remember, however, that exorcisms are only used over inanimate things or over persons who from some cause are unable—like infants or possessed people—to help themselves. Those who are members of Christ's Church by Baptism have had power given them to resist and overcome the devil of themselves. They do not so easily become possessed; for against them the devil has no power that they do not choose in the first instance to let him have. The devil, though stronger in himself than we are, is chained, and we can often keep out of his reach. If attacked, we have the protection of God. If there are legions of evil spirits against us, there are also legions of good angels on our side. We are made by Baptism members of the Church militant, and by Confirmation strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ, and thus are bound by our profession to fight against the evil spirits, who are God's enemies and the enemies of our souls. To do this successfully we must invoke the assistance of God. 'Deliver us from evil,' or from the evil One. The devil fears the sign of the Cross and the name of Jesus.<sup>14</sup> He has been often conquered by them, and can be conquered again. To resist the devil and overcome him we must be bold and courageous.<sup>15</sup> And we must make use of

<sup>12</sup> Acts viii.

<sup>13</sup> 'I conjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth' (Acts xix. 13).

<sup>14</sup> 'I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to go out of her' (Acts xvi. 18).

<sup>15</sup> 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you' (S. James iv. 7).

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every sort of consideration and devotion that the Church sets before us to enable us to act as faith and our conscience tell us we ought to act; since we are engaged in a contest not with other persons like ourselves, but with spirits who are far stronger and more cunning than we are.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> 'For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers; against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places' (Eph. vi. 12).

## CHAPTER XI.

### CREATION OF VISIBLE THINGS.

CREATION OF THE WORLD ; PROVISION OF THINGS BY STORES FOR OUR USE ; AND BY THINGS THAT GROW ; AND BY THINGS THAT HAVE LIFE ; THE WORLD BEAUTIFUL ; AND PLEASANT ; ALL GIVEN OVER TO US ; CARE TAKEN OF US ; HISTORY OF THE CREATION.

**Creation of the World.**—God is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible. The secret forces of Nature are invisible, and we only know of them by their effects, just as we see what the wind does, though we cannot see the wind itself. The souls of men are invisible, and we only communicate with them through their bodies. The angels and other spirits are invisible to us. When they have been seen it has been in a human shape, which they are believed to have assumed. We know of their existence through history, and especially through sacred history. But a part of the things God has made is visible, and can be known by the experience and the evidence of our own senses. We have only to open our eyes and look to see that we are in the midst of things that we did not make and could not make. We are so accustomed to these things that we often do not notice them at all till we lose them or feel the want of them, and then we see how valuable they are. We are kept alive every moment by breathing the air which surrounds us on all sides, so that we have no trouble in procuring it. Next to air, the thing we most want is water, and the rivers and streams and springs and the rain give a plentiful supply of it. It is a rare thing in the world for people

not to be able to get water. There is the sun over our heads to give us light and heat, without which we should be wretched. And yet it would be very uncomfortable if there was not night as well as day. For the darkness of night stops work and business, and makes a time when we must rest and refresh ourselves. It is an immense relief to those who are weary and distressed. The change of night and day does a great deal to make our lives pleasanter. Then we see that the world is made with a great variety and power of change in it, so that men may have the sort of climate they like. And there are many alleviations to what might give us pain and inconvenience : not only night, but clouds and the shade of trees to abate the heat of the sun, and fire and clothing against cold. When we raise a large building we have to provide for its being comfortable and healthy by a number of contrivances to ventilate it, and warm it and keep it clean ; so the world is made habitable and kept healthy by regular currents of hot and cold air, and water, and by gales of wind coming fresh from the sea to keep the air healthy and to mix the different gases, so that they may not injure us, besides their making a good many changes in the weather, so as to keep life from being dull and monotonous.

**Provision of endless Stores for our Use.**—Moreover, we see that this habitation, in which we find ourselves living, is furnished with great stores of different things that we want for our use and comfort. A great many of the things, that we see about us and make use of in daily life, are made out of minerals. Different kinds of stones and earths and metals—coal and iron, silver, copper, tin, and gold—are used by us every day ; we could not do without them. Many of these took thousands of years in their formation. But there are quantities of them in

different parts of the world stored up for our use. We may have to take the trouble to get them, but there is such an abundance of them that we are never afraid of their coming to an end.

**And of Things that grow.**—This is one way in which the world has been prepared for our dwelling-place, by great stores of the things that are most useful to us. But there are some kinds of things that men use in such quantities that no amount of stores would supply them. So we find that the earth, besides being full of stores laid up in it, is always making—or as we say, producing—new stores of those things that we consume very quickly. There are hundreds of different kinds of woods that we want, and of which we must have fresh supplies. Great quantities of hay, straw, and grain are wanted for animals; and herbs, seeds, fruits, and vegetables for ourselves, not only to eat in the summer, but to keep through the winter. And here they are, and are so made that we can make most of them grow where we like, and have the greatest quantity of those sorts that we like best. They grow, as we say, of themselves; all we have to do is to take care of them and of their fruit, and to divide it fairly. And these fruits and seeds and vegetables are in great variety. And there are not only plenty that are wholesome, but plenty that are pleasant too, and suited to different tastes.

**And of such as have Life.**—Besides the things that grow, we see in the world a great many creatures made by God that are alive as we are. The sea and the rivers, and the air above us, and the ground under our feet are teeming with numbers of different sorts of living creatures that we can see; besides there being a great many kinds that we do not see, because they live in wild and distant countries, or are so small that, though they are all about us, they are not visible to the naked eye.

We can do what we like with these creatures. We can let them alone, or destroy them, or use them for our own purposes. We can have many of them or few of them, as we please. There are some that are useful to us in their wild state, because they help to keep things healthy and in good order. Some are useful to us when tamed and living with us. Some are good to eat, and some help towards our amusement and enjoyment, and it is enough to look at some, they are so curious or beautiful. From some we get a constant and regular supply of things that clothe us and help to our comfort and enjoyment.

**The World beautiful.**—In surveying the world which God has provided for our dwelling-place, with all the things that are in it, we ought to notice particularly (1) how beautiful it is. We might have been placed in a world that was sufficient for us to live in, but bare and plain, and without interest. But He who created the world has made it full of beauty and wonder. The books of travellers and of naturalists give us a wonderful account of the exquisite beauty of flowers and animals and scenery. And we need not go to distant lands to observe this, but only look carefully at what is before us and at our feet.<sup>1</sup>

**And pleasant.**—(2) How much there is that is pleasant and enjoyable in the world. We might have been put in a habitation that was dull and without interest. But He who created us, and gave us different affections and appetites and desires and tastes, has made the world full of things to gratify and please us. Every one we meet is interested in something and going after something; the great difficulty is to restrain ourselves from indulging too much, and giving ourselves up to the pursuit of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they labour not, neither do they spin, and yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these' (S. Matt. vi. 28).

pleasant and enjoyable things with which the world is stocked. The Creator has made our dwelling-place pleasant as well as beautiful. When we find it unpleasant, it is almost always that other people make it unpleasant for us, or that we make it unpleasant for ourselves by using it in a wrong way.

**All given to us.**—(3) Another thing to be remarked is, that it is given to us, and put under us. Animals, like ourselves, live in the world and enjoy it; but they cannot do as they like with it, as we can. We do with them, as well as with the plants and the trees, what we like. We turn them to our own purposes; we let them live or not as we please. We make them do what we want. We keep them for our own good. They are given to us, and so we may use them as we wish.<sup>2</sup> The only places where animals have their own way is where there are no men.

**Taken care of for us.**—(4) Lastly, the world is so made that it will go on by itself if we neglect to take care of it. When we set up or contrive anything, however carefully we do it, it is very apt to 'go wrong' and to get into disorder. But the world is so planned that it will, as we say, 'keep right' of itself. And though it is made for us and given to us, and it is our business to look after it and to use it properly, yet until we learn to do this, or when we neglect it, things do not get into a mess and go utterly wrong, as our affairs and inventions do; but God has so arranged the different forces of Nature, the instincts of animals and the passions of

<sup>2</sup> 'The heaven of heavens is the Lord's, but the earth He hath given to the children of men' (Ps. cxiii. 16).

'Behold I have given it to you, every herb bearing seed' (Gen. i. 29).

'And everything that moveth and liveth shall be for meat to you' (Gen. ix. 3).



men, that one is balanced and set against another to correct it and prevent it going far in a wrong direction. Thus the Creator takes care of the world for us, in case we neglect or misuse the things He has given us.

**History of Creation.**—This is the work of creation as we see and observe it. If we read the first chapter of the Book of Genesis we shall find that it gives us an account of the world being made in the beginning and prepared gradually in six long periods, called days<sup>3</sup> in Scripture, until it was fitted for the habitation of man.

‘In the beginning God created heaven and earth. And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the spirit of God moved over the waters. And God said: Be light made. And light was made. And God saw the light that it was good; and He divided the light from the darkness. And He called the light day and the darkness night; and there was evening and morning one day. And God said: Let there be a firmament made amidst the waters; and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made a firmament, and divided the waters that were under the firmament from those that were above the firmament; and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven; and the evening and morning were the second day. God also said: Let the waters that are under the heaven be gathered together into one place; and let the dry land appear. And it was so done. And God called the dry land earth; and the gathering together of the waters He called seas. And God saw that it was good. And He said: Let the earth bring forth the green herb, and such

<sup>3</sup> The word does not mean what we call a day, measured by the rising and setting of the sun, which, indeed, was not created, or at least ordered in relation to the earth’s course, till the fourth day.

as may seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind, which may have seed in itself upon the earth. And it was so done. And the earth brought forth the green herb, and such as yieldeth seed according to its kind, and the tree that beareth fruit, having seed, each one according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day. And God said : Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven to divide the day and the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons and for days and years, to shine in the firmament of heaven, and to give light upon the earth. And it was so done. And God made two great lights : a greater light to rule the day, and a lesser light to rule the night, and the stars. And He set them in the firmament of heaven, to shine upon the earth, and to rule the day and the night, and to divide the light and the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and morning were the fourth day. God also said : Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature having life, and the fowl that may fly over the earth under the firmament of heaven. And God created the great whales and every living and moving creature which the waters brought forth, according to their kinds, and every winged fowl according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And He blessed them, saying : Increase and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea ; and let the birds be multiplied upon the earth. And the evening and morning were the fifth day. And God said : Let the earth bring forth the living creature in its kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth according to their kinds. And it was so done. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and cattle and every thing that creepeth on the earth after its kind. And God saw that it was good.'

## CHAPTER XII.

### CREATION OF MAN AND HIS CONDITION.

CREATION OF MAN ; HIS LIKENESS TO GOD ; HIS SUPERNATURAL GIFTS ; HIS TEMPORAL GIFTS.

**Creation of Man.**—After the creation of the earth and all things in it, sacred history tells us that God made man ; to fill, as it is thought, the place of the fallen angels. He was made, as to his body, out of the dust or slime of the earth, into which God breathed the breath of life, giving him a living soul or spirit, like the angels that were created before him. There are two things remarkable in the Scripture account of man's creation. First, the different way in which it is spoken of from the creation of all that had gone before. In creating other things, God, in His almighty power, merely expressed His will, and it was fulfilled. 'Let there be light,' 'let the earth produce,' and so forth. But when the earth was completed and furnished, and man was to be made to inhabit it, the words used of the Holy Trinity seem to express a special attention and regard to his creation : 'Let us make man in our image and after our likeness.' Secondly, it is clear that God created the world for man ; for He created him last of all, and put him in possession of the earth which He had been making. 'Let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea and the fowls of the air and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping thing that moveth on the earth.'<sup>1</sup> And after He had made Adam and his wife, we are told that He gave everything to be theirs, to be for their use and food.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 26.

**His Likeness to God.**—Man was created in the likeness of God, inasmuch as his soul resembled God in having *intelligence*,—being able to understand, not merely those things that concerned his life and welfare in this world,—as even animals can do,—but to rise above this world, and know God and His works and ways and spiritual things, which animals are incapable of. He is like to God also in having *free-will*. Animals are led by their natural instincts and passions ; but we, when we have once come to be possessed of the knowledge of God, have a power of rising above our nature and bringing ourselves under control to the will of God. And further, man is like to God inasmuch as his soul is *immortal*. Though man is a compound being, consisting of an animal body, animated by a spirit or soul, yet these two are so closely united together as to depend on each other. The two substances of which we consist make one indivisible person.

**Supernatural Gifts.**—Besides the qualities and capacities and endowments which man possessed as a part of the nature which he had received from God, the Church teaches us that God superadded some gifts or graces which were not part of his nature, and are therefore called supernatural. He clothed him, as it were, after he was made with the robe of sanctifying grace, a grace which puts us in God's favour and love,<sup>2</sup> so that we are not only His creatures but His children. Then, too, He gave him the grace of being able to live in accordance with right reason and the will of God, so that his animal nature should be kept in control by conscience, and his conscience enlightened and directed by the will of God. Thus man had not only a nature of high capacities given to him, but also a special gift to enable him to go on well and use it rightly,

**Temporal Gifts.**—He also gave him temporal gifts.

<sup>2</sup> This is what is meant by the term 'original justice.'

providing for his comfort and pleasure by giving him a helpmate who should be a companion to him and the object of his affections,<sup>3</sup> and giving to him as his habitation the choicest part of the earth—a garden watered by rivers and planted with all sorts of trees bearing fruit. Of these he might eat freely without labour or trouble, only with regard to one,—the tree of knowledge of good and evil, planted in the midst of the garden,—God, to try his obedience, gave him a command that he should not eat of it nor touch it. This garden in which he was placed was called Paradise, or a Garden of Pleasure. And Adam and Eve's lifetime was so happy in their state of innocence that when we speak of the terrestrial or earthly paradise we mean a state of natural happiness. They had no cares, nor fears, nor labour, nor poverty, nor sorrow, nor ill health, nor dread of suffering or of death. All their natural desires were under the complete control of reason, and so far as it was good and reasonable to gratify them, there was every means of doing so. They lived in the sunshine of God's love for them, feeling that He was with and over them, and full of gratitude and love to Him for all the beautiful and bounteous gifts with which He had surrounded them. Their heart was full of Him, and their time was occupied with examining and admiring the marvellous works of His hands. They worshipped God by obeying His command and by praising Him for His gifts and goodness; and as they could give Him nothing but what came first from His hands, they offered sacrifice to Him by setting apart from their own use some of the choicest fruits and flowers as the only way they had of showing their gratitude to Him who had given them everything.

<sup>3</sup> Our Lord refers to this as the institution of marriage by God (S. Matt. xix. 4).

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE FALL OF MAN.

HISTORY OF THE FALL ; ITS EFFECTS ON ADAM, AND ON HIS  
POSTERITY ; EXPLANATION OF THESE EFFECTS.

**History of the Fall** — But this happy state did not last. Satan was envious of the happiness of our first parents, and of the favour and love of God which they enjoyed. He determined, therefore, to try if he could not mar the work of God and the happiness of man by leading them into sin.<sup>1</sup> He cunningly tempted Eve first, as being the weakest. Approaching near to her in the form of a serpent,<sup>2</sup> he suggested the thought to her mind that the fruit of the forbidden tree was pleasant to look at and good for food, and that it would give her knowledge of good and evil, and that perhaps she might escape the penalty of death which God had threatened if they disobeyed. She therefore took of the fruit, and ate it, and then gave it to Adam, and he was led by his love for her to yield to the temptation, and ate too, and so both were guilty of disobedience, the first sin that was committed in the world. Then we read that ‘Adam and his wife hid themselves from the face of the Lord God amidst the trees of Paradise. And the Lord God called Adam, and said to him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard Thy voice in Paradise, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself. And He said to him: And who hath

<sup>1</sup> ‘By the envy of the devil, death came into the world’ (Wis. ii. 23).

<sup>2</sup> ‘The old serpent, which is the devil and Satan’ (Apoc. ii. 2).

told thee that thou wast naked, but that thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And Adam said : The woman whom Thou gavest me to be my companion gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said to the woman : Why hast thou done this? And she answered : The serpent deceived me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said to the serpent : Because thou hast done this thing, thou art cursed among all cattle and beasts of the earth : upon thy breast shalt thou go, and earth shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed : she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel. To the woman also He said : I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions : in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee. And to Adam He said : Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work, with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken ; for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return.<sup>3</sup>

**Effects of the Fall on Adam.**—In the Scripture account we see that the punishment of our first parents was a very heavy one, and that it came upon them in two ways—externally, in the changed state of the world, and internally, in the changed state of their own souls. (1) The world was no longer a place of happiness to them ; they were cast out of the garden of Paradise, and

<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii.



an angel stood with a flaming sword to prevent their return. Nature was no longer to go on in order, and in obedience to man, because he had been disobedient to God. The earth was to bear fruit, yet not so perfectly and easily as before, but with labour and toil. The woman was to bring forth children, but with pain and sorrow, and they were to be liable to sickness and to death. (2) But the greatest part of their punishment was that which was internal. They lost the state of innocence. They had a consciousness of guilt on them which made them wish to cover their bodies and conceal themselves from God's sight. This was because they had lost sanctifying grace, by which they possessed the favour and love of God, and which is the supernatural life of the soul; and with this they lost the supernatural gift or grace by which the body was in subjection to the reason, and the reason to God. Their nature, which was made by God, and which was in itself good, became disordered; that is, the different parts were weakened and out of order through the wound or blow inflicted on the soul by sin. Their affections became depraved, their understanding less clear, their will less strong; so that whereas it was before easy to them to serve God and to keep themselves from sin, now that their nature was wounded by sin it became a matter of effort and difficulty.

**On his Posterity.**—The fall of man by sin is almost the greatest event that has ever happened in the world, because the effects of it did not come on Adam alone, but on all that came after him. God has made all men to be members of one family,<sup>4</sup> so that the good or evil which comes to one affects the rest. It is a very common thing for a man to contract a disease through an

<sup>4</sup> 'He hath made of one (blood) all mankind to dwell upon the whole face of the earth' (Acts xvii. 26).

intemperate or disorderly life, and for the effects of this to be suffered by his children in their having a diseased or weakened constitution. They were not guilty of the sin, yet they partake in the effects of it. If a man loses his character, and is disgraced in the eyes of the world through dishonesty or open crime, his children share in his disgrace. If a man comes into a large fortune, which is left for himself and his family, and squanders it, his children are reduced to poverty as well as himself. This is very nearly what the sin of our first parents did to us. We have the same nature that they had. But, after creating them with that nature, God gave them something more. He endowed them richly with supernatural gifts, which they forfeited by sin. And we, being their children, come into the world possessing the same nature indeed, though in some measure diseased and disordered, but without the rich endowment of supernatural grace which they lost by sin. We enter life, as it were, poor and naked, and having to recover our lost possessions each one for himself. We find ourselves still outside the gates of Paradise, and have to get back into it by our own efforts. Adam and Eve forsook God, disobeyed His command, and listened to the word and suggestion of Satan, the great enemy of God. And so we, their children, come into this world under the obedience and influence of the devil, to whose side our first parents went over. This is what is meant by our being called children of wrath, *i.e.* under God's wrath, and children of the devil, *i.e.* born in his camp, the offspring of his followers.

**Explanation of these Effects.**—The question may be asked, Why should such dreadful effects come from one sin, and that, as it appears, so trifling a one? If it was a trifling thing, yet it is what we see every day, that

great and dreadful consequences follow from very small causes. Very often we read of a battle being lost and hundreds or thousands of persons killed by some little duty being neglected, or a single command being disobeyed. A pointsman is careless, or forgetful of what seems a small thing, pulling a handle or touching a bell, and the consequence in a few moments is a dreadful accident with great loss of lives and of money. It is true that God tried Adam's obedience about a very little matter; but when the command concerning the Tree of Knowledge was broken, this little disobedience proved that our first parents had preferred their own gratification rather than to please God, quite as much as if they had broken His command in a far more serious matter. For a feather shows which way the wind is just as clearly as if a tree were blown down by it. Our first parents' sin was neglecting the command of God, and listening to the suggestions of the devil. It was loving themselves more than God; caring more about their own pleasure than His will. This is what all sin is, and why it is so bad. Adam and Eve were in a state of sanctifying grace, *i.e.* God's favour and love. They turned their backs on God and turned to the devil, and they did this without having a weak disordered nature, such as we now have since the Fall. Some of the most loathsome and dreadful diseases come from a little speck of poisonous matter getting into the blood, or a seed of something bad, which grows and spreads until it destroys the health and life. Like this the sin of Adam was the first little seed of disorder in the world. God made the world outside us, and our souls within us, to go on in a particular and orderly way; now we see the world full of disorder, misery, pain, confusion. This has all grown and spread over the world and the souls of men from one little beginning. The first seed

of it was that little trifling act, as it seems, of Adam, that began it all. Nature no longer runs in the smooth way which was intended; but has gone off the lines of order and obedience, and come like a huge engine to a frightful smash. 'God made man and left him in the hand of his own counsel; He set evil and good before him, life and death.'<sup>5</sup> And he chose evil; and so, he and the world God made for him and gave to him, were brought under the influence and power of evil. It is man who has made the devil to be 'prince of this world'<sup>6</sup> by the first man going over to his obedience, and his posterity following in the same course.

<sup>5</sup> Ecclus. xv. 14, 18.

<sup>6</sup> S. John xiv. 30.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE SECOND ARTICLE : GOD THE SON.

PROMISES OF A REDEEMER ; AND TYPES ; FULFILLED IN CHRIST ;  
THE INCARNATION ; HERESIES ON THE INCARNATION ; CHRIST  
TRULY GOD ; AND TRULY MAN ; ONE PERSON ; TWO DISTINCT  
NATURES ; CHRIST'S NAMES AND TITLES.

**Promises of a Redeemer.**—After our first parents had been driven out of Paradise and found that they had thrown away the happiness God had given them, they were grieved at their folly, and repented and turned to God, and God showed them mercy. He loved them as His own children despite of their disobedience ; and though He did not restore them to their former state, yet, on the other hand, He left them in possession of their free-will which they had so abused, and of the beautiful world which they had spoilt and disordered. He gave them garments of skins to cover themselves ; He appointed that every seventh day should be a Sabbath, or a day of rest from the labour which He had given to man as a part of his punishment, and consoled Eve under her punishment of bringing forth children in pain, that of her seed One should be born who should crush the head, or power, of the Serpent that had led her into sin. This is considered to be the first promise of a Saviour who should deliver man from the punishment of his sin, and from the power of the devil into whose hands he had put himself,—of a Redeemer or Restorer who would bring him back to Paradise again. And from this time God repeatedly reminded those who served Him most faith-

fully, of His intention to restore man by One, who would be born into the world and would save it.

**And Types.**—Besides these promises made to the Patriarchs He also taught them in the way that men used to learn in those days, by making things to happen which were pictures, or, as we call them, types, of what God was going to do. There were types of our Lord suffering, of our Lord sacrificed, of our Lord raised up again as a great Prince; types of His Mother honoured and loved by Him, and sorrowing over His death; types of the Church and types of the Sacraments. Later on, as the time was nearer when the Saviour was to come, there were prophecies concerning the time and manner of His being born, of His character and way of life, of His sufferings, death, and resurrection, and of this Messiah, or Christ, or Anointed One, being not only a Prophet, a Priest, and a King,<sup>1</sup> but of His being the Son of God. This was the great mystery that our Lord unfolded to the ruler of the Jews who came to learn of Him: ‘That God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that every one that believed in Him might not perish, but have life everlasting; for God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him.’<sup>2</sup>

**Christ our Redeemer.**—In the first part of the Creed we profess our belief in One God, the Creator of man and of the world. In the second part we profess our belief in God as the Redeemer of man after he had fallen. And as this work of our redemption is the greatest thing that ever took place in the world, and is the great truth on which all our salvation depends, the Creed dwells on it more explicitly and at length, so that it may be well understood who it was who redeemed us, and how He redeemed

<sup>1</sup> Dan. vii.

<sup>2</sup> S. John iii. 16.

us. The second and third articles refer to the former, and the subsequent articles speak of what our Lord did for us.

**Both God and Man.**—God the Son did not work our salvation as God, but as God and Man. And so this second part does not say, ‘I believe in God the Son, the second Person,’ but ‘I believe in Jesus Christ (who was and is) His only Son, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.’ The way in which man was saved from sin and damnation was by the death and resurrection, not of God only, who could not suffer or die; nor of man only, who could not rise from death, but by what was done by one Person who was both God and Man together, and who could therefore both die for our sins and rise again for our justification.<sup>3</sup> We are made up of *two substances* very different from one another, body and soul. We can think and reason because we are souls; we can eat and drink and sleep because we are bodies; yet these two different substances are so united that it is not that the soul does one thing and the body another, but it is we ourselves who do it all, being each of us one person made up of *two different substances*. Very much like this, our Lord possessed two natures. He was Man and He was God, and He is so still. Whatever God can do He can do, for He is God; and whatever man can do He can do, for He is Man.<sup>4</sup> Yet the two natures are not divided, so that God did one thing and Man did another; but whatever was done was done by one Person—Jesus Christ, who did both the Divine actions because He was God, and the human actions because He was Man. He, being God, took on Himself our human nature, and so He could feel for us,

<sup>3</sup> Rom. iv. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Though of course He cannot sin, for sin is a rebellion of the will against God.



suffer as we do, and be tempted by external temptations as we are, and even go through death ; and being God also, He could do this and yet not be overcome by it, but could rise out of it, and so could not only set us the example of doing this, but also in some mysterious way make us capable of doing it. He not only humbled Himself to our human nature, but by doing so exalted us to His Divine nature ;<sup>5</sup> and He took it with Him and carried it through the sufferings and degradation of sin, and brought it out victorious. For suffering and degradation and death could not oppress or overcome Him.<sup>6</sup> In this way our Lord redeemed us and destroyed the work which the devil had done in the fall of man.

**Heresies respecting the Incarnation.**—As then our redemption was brought about by Jesus Christ, through His being both God and Man, the Church has always been most careful in teaching this doctrine to all her children, and guarding it against all error. It is so difficult to understand, and so hard to believe, that the great Creator of heaven and earth, the Sovereign Lord of all things, should humble Himself to be born as a little helpless infant, to live a life of poverty and suffering, and to be put to a death of degradation and torture as a criminal, that from the earliest times there were persons who disbelieved this article of Faith, and even attacked it. They tried in some way or another to get out of believing the whole truth as it is taught by the Church. Some, like the Gnostics of old, maintained that our Lord had not a real body, but only the appearance of one, like the bodies assumed by angels, so that He did not really

<sup>5</sup> 'To them gave He power to become the sons of God' (John i.).

<sup>6</sup> 'It was impossible that He should be detained by it' (Acts ii. 24).

suffer or die. Others followed Apollinarius in believing that He had no soul, without which He would not be man, nor could His death be a true one. But the greatest heretics were the Arians, who, like the Socinians now, taught that our Lord had not a Divine nature. They maintained that He was the Son of God, but not God Himself, nor quite equal to God, but some high angelic spirit, higher than all others, but made by God. Then there were others, like the Nestorians, who admitted the two natures in our Lord, but divided Him, making of Him two persons. It was the human person, they said, who was born of the Blessed Virgin, and who was crucified and died ; and it was the Divine Person who worked miracles, stilled the sea, and raised the dead. They denied that Mary was the Mother of God, and that it was God who suffered for our sins. And because this was an untrue and mischievous doctrine some fell into the opposite extreme, and not only asserted that our Lord was one Person, but that His two natures were not only closely united, but mingled together. So that He had not a perfect human nature, nor a perfect Divine nature, but a mixture, so to speak, of the two. These were the Euty-chians. A great deal of the history of the first centuries of the Church is taken up with the account of these heresies, and those engaged for and against them.

**Christ is truly God.**—In order to inculcate an accurate knowledge of this great doctrine, the Catechism lays down, in opposition to these four errors, first, that *Jesus Christ is truly God*, that He is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and that He has one and the same Nature with God the Father, and that He was always God, born of the Father from all eternity. The Nicene Creed expresses this truth still more explicitly than the Apostles' Creed. Its words are : 'and (I believe) in one

Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages; God of God, Light of Light, true God of true God; not made but begotten; of the same substance as the Father; by Whom all things were made.'

**Truly Man.**—Secondly, that *He is truly Man*, because He has the nature of man, having a body and soul like ours; that he was not always Man, but has been made Man only from the time of His Incarnation. On this point the words of the Athanasian Creed are very clear: 'The right faith is that we should believe and profess (our belief) that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man: God of the substance of His Father, begotten before all time, and Man of the substance of His Mother, born in time; perfect God and perfect Man, consisting of a rational soul and human body; equal to the Father inasmuch as He is God, and less than the Father inasmuch as He is Man.'

**One Person.**—Thirdly, the Athanasian Creed goes on to say, 'Who, although He is God and Man, is nevertheless not two, but one Christ.' The Catechism expresses the same truth by saying that though there are two natures in Jesus Christ, the nature of God and the nature of Man, yet there is in Him only *one Person*, which is the Person of God the Son.<sup>7</sup> Hence it is true to say that God was born, that God suffered and died for us; for though God in His pure Divine nature could not be born or die, yet, having taken our human nature on Himself, He, the one Person, God, did these things, for there was in Jesus Christ no separate human Person. But the expression used in the Creed, that Jesus Christ was born and suf-

<sup>7</sup> The Creed lays down that this is so because Christ is one Person, 'not by the Divine nature being turned into flesh and blood,'—the Divine nature coming down, as it were, to the human, —but by God taking up into Himself the human nature.

ferred, is more easy to understand and more complete ; for though it was God, yet it was not God only, but it was God the Son, and God the Son clothed in a human nature.

**Distinct Natures.**—Fourthly, when the Catechism speaks of our Lord having two natures, it teaches that our Lord had two natures remaining distinct and unconfused, and was not a mixture of two natures, or something as it were between, and made up of the two. The Athanasian Creed is very clear on this point, laying it down that ‘Christ is absolutely one, not from the confusion or mingling of the substance, but because there is only one Person.’ ‘For as the rational soul and the body make up the man who is one’—that is, by a close union, yet without confusion—‘so God and Man are together one Christ.’

**Christ’s Names and Titles.**—The second article not only teaches our Lord’s Nature, but the Office and Character which He came into the world to fulfil. These are expressed by the double name—Jesus Christ. The name Jesus means Saviour, and was given to our Lord when He was circumcised by His Mother and S. Joseph in obedience to the direction of the Archangel Gabriel, who told her that she should conceive in her womb and bring forth a Son, and should call His name Jesus, or Saviour, because He should save His people from their sins. The angel went on to tell her that this Saviour was not a mere man, a great prophet or angel, but ‘the Son of the Most High, who was to rule over the house of Jacob for ever, and of whose kingdom there was to be no end.’<sup>8</sup> But when, nine months after, our Lord was born, again angels appeared, and one of them, speaking to the shepherds, told them that that day a

<sup>8</sup> S. Luke i. 32.

Saviour was born, and that this Saviour was Christ the Lord. The Israelites, and after them the Jewish people, were always looking forward to the fulfilment of the promises and prophecies and types of the great Prophet and Prince and High-Priest, who was to be sent by God to restore His people to their former greatness and prosperity. They called Him the *Messias*, meaning the One who was to be sent; sometimes the *Prophet*, meaning the One that had been promised;<sup>9</sup> sometimes the *Christ*, which means the *Anointed One*, because those who were made prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. They lived in constant expectation of the advent of the Christ; they read the Scriptures and meditated on the prophecies of where He was to be born, and when, and of what family; and whenever any extraordinary person appeared, they speculated as to whether he was the Christ who was so long looked for. So when our Lord was born, the angel not only announced the birth of a Saviour, but that He was 'the Christ, the Lord,' who had been so long looked for. Our Lord told the Samaritan woman that He was the *Messias*; and the Apostles, when they preached to the Jews, not only 'preached Jesus' to them, but also proved that He was the true Christ whom God had sent. They were, however, slow to believe that their long-expected Prince and Deliverer could be one who was so humble and poor and despised. They looked for one who would restore the kingdom to Israel by making them rich and great and powerful in this world, whereas Christ came to give His people an everlasting kingdom, and to give it not to them only, but to all who were ready to believe in His name. The Jews were ready to accept a temporal kingdom, they even carried our

• Deut. xviii. 15.

Lord away to make Him a king;<sup>10</sup> but when He showed them that His kingdom was not of this world,<sup>11</sup> they, His own people, would not have Him.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> 'They would take Him away to make Him a king' (John vi. 15).

<sup>11</sup> 'My kingdom is not of this world' (John xviii. 36).

<sup>12</sup> 'He came to His own, and His own received Him not' (John i.).

## CHAPTER XV.

### THE THIRD ARTICLE.

CHRIST'S CONCEPTION ; HIS BIRTH. THE BLESSED VIRGIN, THE MOTHER OF GOD ; HER IMMACULATE PURITY. DEVOTIONS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN : THE 'HAIL MARY,' THE ROSARY, THE LITANY OF LORETTO, THE SCAPULAR, FEASTS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

**The Conception of Christ.**—The second article speaks of Jesus Christ, that He is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity made man. The third teaches how He became man. Though He truly took our nature on Him, yet He did not take it in the corrupted or fallen state, as it is in each of us who are descended from Adam. Our Lord had no man for His Father. The Blessed Virgin, though espoused to S. Joseph for her protection, had taken a vow of virginity ; and this explains what she said to the Angel Gabriel, when he appeared to her on the 25th of March, the Feast of the Annunciation, bringing to her word that God had chosen her to be the Mother. He said, 'Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High ; and the Lord God shall give to Him the throne of David His Father, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever. And of His kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel, How shall this be done, because I know not man ?' But the angel explained that she was not to give up her vow of virginity, nor was the Child that she should bring forth



to have an earthly father. 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy (One) that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.' The body that our Lord was going to take was not to be conceived in the ordinary way of nature; but the Spirit of God Himself was to give it life in a supernatural manner. We are told in the Gospel of S. Luke that Jesus was 'supposed' by the world 'to be the Son of Joseph.'<sup>1</sup> But S. Joseph knew that this was not so, and was in wonder and trouble about the Child until the angel of the Lord appeared to him and said, 'Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.' And the Gospel adds that this miraculous conception of the Messiah had been foretold by the Prophet Isaias: 'Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us.'<sup>2</sup> Then Joseph, we are told, took Mary as his wife, living with her as her father or elder brother, and becoming her guardian and protector, and the foster-father of the Holy Child as soon as He was born.

**The Birth of Christ.**—The conception of our Lord took place on the Feast of the Annunciation, and the Child was not born for nine months after. Part of this time the Blessed Virgin spent with her cousin S. Elizabeth in the mountains of Judea. Then she returned to Nazareth, and remained there till an order of the Emperor Augustus came forth, requiring every one to be enrolled in his own city. As S. Joseph was of the lineage of King David, he belonged to Bethlehem, the city of David; and he had therefore to make the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to enrol himself as one of the

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke iii. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Isaias vii. 14.

family of David. When he and Mary his wife arrived there in the month of December, the town was crowded with people who had come for the same purpose. They could find no room in the inn, and had to take refuge in a stable for shelter. This stable was one of the underground caverns of which the Holy Land is full, and which are used for tombs, and sometimes for habitations of men and places of concealment. It is now called the Grotto of the Nativity, and a large church has been built over it, with a way down from the centre of the building. But at that time it was only a shelter for cattle, and was a miserable place for Joseph and Mary to go to. It was while they were there that the days were fulfilled for her to be delivered. And when she had brought forth the Divine Infant, she could do no better for Him than to wrap Him in swaddling clothes and lay Him in the manger of the cattle. It was there that He was adored on Christmas-day<sup>3</sup> by the Jewish shepherds, who were watching over their flocks when they heard the angels singing ‘Gloria in excelsis,’ and who were told the good tidings of the birth of a Saviour, ‘who was Christ the Lord.’ The angel gave them as a direction for finding Him, that He was ‘lying in a manger.’ After the shepherds came the Gentile kings or Wise Men from the East to worship Him, guided by a star, which led them to Jerusalem. They saw Herod the king, and inquired of him where Christ was to be born. Herod learned from the Chief Priests and Scribes that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, and sent the Wise Men thither. Then they again saw the star, and followed it, till they came to where the Child was ; and, entering into the house, ‘they found Him with Mary His Mother, and fell down and adored Him.’

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* the Day of Christ’s Mass.

The Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God.—Jesus Christ being the Son of God made Man, and being born of the Blessed Virgin, from this it follows that the Blessed Virgin is the Mother of God. For though, indeed, as regards His Divine nature, He was born before all worlds, and it was only as regards His human nature or manhood that He was conceived in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, yet since these two natures were indissolubly united in one Person, and that Person was the Person of God the Son, Mary, of whom He was born, was truly His Mother. As the soul and body make one being or Person, so our Lord's Godhead and Manhood make one Person. Those who would deny to the Blessed Virgin the title of Mother of God are making our Lord to be two Persons, after the heresy of Nestorius. And this makes the Church jealous of preserving this title to our Lady. It is, in fact, to be found in the Gospels; for when the Blessed Virgin went to visit S. Elizabeth, the latter, 'filled with the Holy Ghost,' said to her, 'Whence is this (grace or honour) to me, that *the Mother of my Lord* should come to me?'<sup>4</sup> The great devotion which has always been paid by Catholics to Mary is first and principally because of her being exalted by God into so dear and close a relationship with Himself—a closer one than that possessed by any other created being. And so far from the honour and worship paid to her taking away from that paid to God, it is principally for God's sake that we pay it to her. It is because we see in her 'the Mother of our Lord' that we love and venerate her.

**Her Immaculate Purity.**—Yet while her maternity is one title to her exalted position, her purity is another. And in one way it is the greatest, being the cause of the other. For by God's grace she merited to be His Mother

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke i. 42.

because of her stainless virtue. God had, indeed, exempted her from the stain of original sin by an Immaculate Conception, and He filled her with His grace; but all His gifts would not have rendered her acceptable to Him without her own exertions to correspond to God's designs for her and to the graces He gave her. It was her spotless purity, her profound humility, and her perfect obedience to God's will<sup>5</sup> that raised her to her exalted dignity. The Church pays such devotion to her (1) because of her own immaculate purity and virtue, and (2) because of her being exalted to be the Mother of God.

#### DEVOTIONS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

**The Hail Mary.**—The love or devotion of the Church to the Blessed Virgin is shown by the number of different devotions—*i.e.* prayers and practices of devotion—which have ever been in use to her. The first of these is the Hail Mary, or Angelical Salutation, so called because it consists in the recitation of the words with which the Angel Gabriel greeted her when he came to announce to her that she was to be the Mother of our Lord: 'Hail, full of grace; the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women.' S. Elizabeth used the same salutation to her: 'Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.' These words of the angel and of S. Elizabeth, taken out of S. Luke's Gospel, made up the prayer most commonly used to the Blessed Virgin. Later on the remaining part of the Hail Mary was added out of devotion; but it was regarded,

<sup>5</sup> When on one occasion a woman, who was listening to our Lord's teaching, cried out, 'Blessed is the womb that bare Thee, and the breasts that gave Thee suck,' our Lord replied, 'Nay, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it' (S. Luke xi. 27).

and is still in some places, as a distinct prayer from the Hail Mary, people speaking of 'the Hail Mary' and 'the Holy Mary.' The expression, 'The Lord be with thee,'<sup>6</sup> is to be found in other parts of Scripture as a kind of pious salutation very similar to the expression still used in the Offices of the Church, 'Dominus vobiscum,'—'The Lord be with you.' But here the angel must be considered to have been expressing a fact, and not merely a wish. The Angelus is another devotion in honour of the Blessed Virgin in almost universal use. It is so called from the first word, '*The Angel* of the Lord declared to Mary,' &c., and consists of three versicles taken from Scripture which commemorate the Incarnation of our Lord and His birth of the Blessed Virgin, with the repetition of the Hail Mary after each. It is, indeed, rather a devotion in honour of the Incarnation, and of the Blessed Virgin as the instrument of it.

**The Rosary.**—The Rosary, or Chaplet of the Blessed Virgin, is a devotion that consists of the reciting of an Our Father and ten Hail Marys, while meditating on each of the fifteen mysteries of our Lord's life. It is divided into three parts. The first consists of the five Joyful Mysteries: (1) the Annunciation, (2) the Visitation, (3) the Nativity, (4) the Presentation, and (5) the Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple. The second part consists of the five Sorrowful Mysteries: (1) the Agony in the Garden, (2) the Scourging of our Lord, (3) His being crowned with thorns and mocked, (4) the Bearing of the Cross to Calvary, and (5) the Crucifixion. The third part consists of five Glorious Mysteries: (1) the Resurrection, (2) the Ascension, (3) the Descent of the Holy Ghost, (4) the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin,

<sup>6</sup> So the angel saluted Gedeon the judge: 'The Lord is with thee, O most valiant of men' (Judges vi. 12).

and (5) her Coronation in Heaven. The practice of saying prayers on a chaplet of beads is very ancient, but it was S. Dominic who taught this particular form of it, as a means and help to people to call to mind the events of our Lord's life and some other mysteries. And meditating on these mysteries is a part of the devotion, which each must fulfil according to his ability in order to obtain the spiritual benefits of it.

**The Litany of Loretto.**—There is scarcely any devotion in more common use than the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, or, as it used to be called, the Litany of Loretto, for it seems to have first come into use at Loretto. Loretto is a town in Italy to which the house in which the Incarnation of our Lord took place at Nazareth is believed to have been transported, and which is therefore one of the most celebrated shrines of the Blessed Virgin. The Litany chiefly consists of invocations of the Blessed Virgin under different titles, some of which refer to her own virtue and sanctity, some to her exalted dignity on earth and in heaven, and some to the types of her in the Old Testament.

**The Scapular of Mount Carmel.**—Another common devotion in honour of the Blessed Virgin is wearing the Scapular. This is that particular part of the habit of the Monks of Mount Carmel which hangs over the shoulders (*scapula*). The Monks of Mount Carmel in the Holy Land are said to have derived their institute from some ascetics who lived there in the times of the Gospel, and who had a special love and veneration for our Lord's Mother. Their monastery there and their order are dedicated to her. And many people in the world who had the same spirit of devotion to the Mother of God, but who could not join 'the Order of the Blessed Virgin,' as it was called, were affiliated to it, and wore the Carmelite

Scapular, as a badge of belonging to it. There are some other Scapulars, but the brown Scapular of Mount Carmel was the first and is still that most in use.

**Feasts in Honour of the Blessed Virgin.**—Besides these well-known devotions in honour of the Blessed Virgin, there are many others less common; and there are in the course of the year a great many Feasts in her honour. Besides the Assumption, which is one of the eight days of obligation, there is the Feast of her Immaculate Conception, of her Nativity, of her Presentation in the Temple, of the Annunciation of the Angel to her, of the Visitation, of the Purification, and of those in honour of her Purity, her Maternity, her Patronage, and some others in memory of particular titles belonging to her and orders dedicated to her.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE FOURTH ARTICLE.

ITS MEANING. HISTORY AND STAGES OF THE PASSION ; DOCTRINES CONNECTED WITH IT ; ENORMITY OF SIN ; ATONEMENT FOR IT ; GOD'S LOVE OF MAN. DEVOTIONS ON THE PASSION ; WAY OF THE CROSS.

**Meaning of Article.**—The second and third articles relate to the fact that God the Son became Man, when and how He did so. The next four articles explain *why* He did so,—to atone for our sins by His suffering, to restore us to His Father's love, to redeem us from the power of Satan by His Resurrection, to be our Advocate in heaven, and to be our future Judge. The first of these articles relates to the Passion and Death of Christ. 'He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.' Pontius Pilate was appointed Governor of Judea by the Roman Emperor in the year 26. He was not like Herod, a Jew, but a Gentile. Towards the end of His public ministry our Lord repeatedly foretold that He should be delivered up to the Gentiles at Jerusalem, that He should be scourged and spit on, and at last crucified. And the Creed refers to Pontius Pilate to bring home to our minds the time and the way in which our Lord suffered, and that He suffered till His death was accomplished, and His dead body was laid in the grave.

**History of the Passion.**—The full history of Christ's sufferings, or, as it is commonly called, His Passion, is given by the four Evangelists. From putting together what they say we get an account of nearly all we know on

the subject, there being only a very few additional particulars handed down by tradition.<sup>1</sup> The detailed account belongs to sacred history; but to facilitate the study of what is told us in the Gospels, the several stages in the history of the Passion shall be set down here.<sup>2</sup>

**Garden of Gethsemani.**—The Passion is considered to have commenced with our Lord's going forth with His Apostles, after the institution of the Holy Eucharist, into the Garden of Gethsemani. This is a little garden of olive-trees still existing at the foot of the Mount of Olives, and 'it was night,' perhaps eight or nine o'clock, when our Lord reached there. It was there that He watched and prayed, and underwent His Sacred Agony; and it was there that He was found at midnight by Judas and the band of soldiers.

**Palace of the High-Priest.**—Our Lord was bound and taken thence to the palace of the High-Priest, and brought first before Annas, who sent Him to Caiaphas, the High-Priest of that year. Caiaphas examined our Lord first by himself. Our Lord was for some hours in the hall of Caiaphas, where He was denied by Peter. As it drew on towards morning the whole council of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, called the Sanhedrim, were assembled there, and condemned our Lord as guilty of blasphemy, and determined on His death. Judas, seeing He was condemned, hung himself.

**Pilate's and Herod's Houses.**—In the morning (between six and nine) they took Him to Pilate and demanded His death. Pilate not finding Him guilty of

<sup>1</sup> The principal ones are, our Lord's meeting His holy Mother and S. Veronica on His way to Calvary, and His falling three times under the weight of the Cross.

<sup>2</sup> A consecutive account in the words of the Gospels will be found in the *New Testament Narrative*, to be had of any Catholic bookseller.

any crime against the State, and not understanding the laws of the Jews, tried to escape the difficulty by sending Him to Herod, the Tetrarch of Galilee, who was staying in Jerusalem at that time. Our Lord was questioned by Herod, and when He would not answer anything, was sent back through the streets, dressed up in white garments to suggest that He was a fool or idiot.

**Pilate's Hall.**—He was therefore again brought before Pilate, who, not being able to satisfy the chief priests that He was innocent, resorted to the expedient of offering them the choice of Barabbas, a notorious criminal, or Jesus, to be set free on account of its being the Paschal festival. The people were put up to clamour for the release of Barabbas and the crucifixion of Jesus. Upon this Pilate yielded to them, and condemned Him to be scourged and afterwards crucified.

**Courtyard of Pilate's House.**—Our Lord was taken by the soldiers and scourged, and afterwards taken into the court of Pilate's house. Here they dressed Him up as a king, mocked Him, spit on Him, and struck Him. It was after this that Pilate led Him forth to show Him to the people from a balcony, saying to them, 'Ecce Homo'—'Behold the Man,' whom you accuse of trying to make Himself a king. Pilate thought the sight of Jesus's sufferings might move their pity and satisfy their rage and envy, but they still clamoured for His death. Pilate again took Him into the judgment-hall and questioned Him, but at length yielded to the clamour, and gave Him up to be crucified.

**Way of the Cross.**—Being condemned to death,—it may have been about eleven o'clock,—our Lord is made to carry His Cross to Mount Calvary, in company with two thieves. On the way He is followed by some of the women who had become His disciples; Simon the Cyre-

nian helps Him to carry the Cross, which our Lord is too weak to support. At Calvary He is stripped of His garments, and nailed naked to the Cross, with one of the thieves on each side of Him. The soldiers divide His garments among themselves.

**Mount Calvary.**—Our Lord hung alive on the Cross for three hours guarded by the soldiers and watched by the women, of whom His Mother and S. Mary Magdalene together with S. John, stood near the Cross. For three hours, from noon till three o'clock, there was darkness over all the land. During this time our Lord spoke in prayer for His murderers, to console His Mother and S. John, to the penitent thief, and to His Father in heaven,—seven times in all,—and expired at three o'clock, when there was a great earthquake, and the rocks were rent, and the veil of the Temple was torn in two.

**Holy Sepulchre.**—As this Good Friday was the Eve of the Paschal Sabbath, the Jews besought Pilate that the bodies of those crucified might not remain on the Cross. Pilate therefore gave order for their death. The soldiers broke the legs of the thieves, and the Centurion, finding that our Lord was already dead, pierced His heart with a spear. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took down the Body of Christ and laid it in a new sepulchre close by, rolling over it a great stone to cover it. Here the holy women sat and watched it; and later on, Pilate, at the instance of the Jews, sent some soldiers to guard it. And so it remained till the Sabbath was past.

**Doctrines connected with the Passion.**—‘All this was done,’ says S. John, ‘that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.’ God, having determined to redeem man by the sacrifice of His Son, continued from the time of the Fall to give repeated types and prophecies to show that the Saviour of the world was to save it by His sufferings and death. Abel was

a type of Christ suffering, in the sacrifice of blood that he offered, in being killed by his brother, and mourned over by his sorrowing mother. Isaac was a type of our Lord, in being taken to sacrifice by his father. Joseph was a still more striking type, in being persecuted and let down into the pit by his brothers. Later on there were many prophecies concerning the Passion of our Lord, not a few of which are referred to in the Gospel narrative; that He should be betrayed by one who ate bread with Him;<sup>3</sup> that He should be sold for thirty pieces of silver;<sup>4</sup> and should be classed with malefactors;<sup>5</sup> that His garments should be parted;<sup>6</sup> that gall and vinegar should be given Him to drink;<sup>7</sup> that His side should be pierced;<sup>8</sup> and that the reason of these sufferings would not be any sins of His own, but our iniquities.<sup>9</sup> The fulfilment of all that had been foretold of Him gave evidence, to those who knew and believed the Scriptures, that He was the promised Messiah and Saviour of the world. S. Peter in preaching, and S. Paul in his Epistles, appealed to the Scriptures as a proof 'that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.'<sup>10</sup>

**Enormity of Sin.**—From the Passion and Death of Christ we also learn the heinous nature of sin. That God, the Supreme Ruler of the Universe should take the nature of man, and come into the world, and that His own creatures should put Him to death, makes us see what lengths sin, which we think so lightly of, can go to. And that God should give Himself into the hands of men to suffer, as a remedy for our sins, makes us see that sin must indeed be very hateful in God's sight to require such a remedy. How can that be a trifling matter which

<sup>3</sup> Ps. xl. 10.<sup>4</sup> Zach. xi. 12.<sup>5</sup> Isa. liii. 12.<sup>6</sup> Ps. xxii. 18.<sup>7</sup> Ps. lxix. 21.<sup>8</sup> Zach. xii. 10.<sup>9</sup> Isa. liii. 4.<sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 3.

is only washed out by the shedding of Blood;<sup>11</sup> and that the Blood of Jesus Christ, God and Man?

**Atonement for Sin.**—But however enormous was the guilt of sin and God's hatred of it, Christ's Passion and Death made sufficient satisfaction for it. When we wilfully offend God nothing that we can do will make reparation for it. Our littleness and insignificance in comparison with God makes our offending Him all the worse, and makes us, at the same time, less able to make satisfaction for the offence; nor could we of ourselves ever make it. What is meant, then, by the doctrine of the Atonement is that Christ took on Himself the sins of the whole world, and gave Himself up to suffer the punishment we deserve, and so to *atone* for our sins. The same thing is expressed in a different way by saying that Christ washed us from our sins in His own Blood,<sup>12</sup> redeemed us by His death, and that the ransom or purchase-money that He paid for us was His precious Blood, which He shed for us. What Adam did by his sin, as has been already explained, was to go over to Satan's camp, and join himself to the enemies of God. By this he put himself under the influence and dominion of the devil. But our Lord delivered him from the power of the devil and reconciled him once more to God, whom he had offended. We could never have done this for ourselves.<sup>13</sup> When Christ did it, it was by giving His own life and shedding His own Blood as our ransom.<sup>14</sup> So the Catechism says that 'Christ Jesus is called our Redeemer because His precious Blood is the price by which we are ransomed.' By Christ's Passion and Death, therefore, we are both

<sup>11</sup> 'Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin' (Heb. ix. 22).

<sup>12</sup> Apoc. i. 5.

<sup>13</sup> 'No brother can redeem, nor shall man redeem' (Ps. xlviii. 8).

<sup>14</sup> S. Mark x. 45; 1 Tim. ii. 6.



delivered from the consequences of sin, the power of Satan, and we are reconciled to God and transferred back again to the kingdom of God. 'When we were enemies (of God) we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.'<sup>15</sup>

**God's Love of Man.**—One thing more the Passion of our Lord brings home to our minds more than anything else does, viz. God's love to man. God's love to us is, indeed, shown by His creation of us and of the world, with all that is in it, for us, and by the hope and promise held out to us of eternal happiness hereafter. God could, however, as Sovereign Lord of all things, give us these benefits without effort or cost to Himself. But His redeeming us by His Incarnation and Death expresses a care for us and interest in our welfare, a special regard for us, which much more brings home to our minds the greatness of His love for us. That He should suffer the death of the Cross for us, to save us from the punishment we deserve, and that while we were still in a state of sin and alienation from Him,<sup>16</sup> shows a stronger affection for us than we should have thought possible. 'God so loved the world,' our Lord said, 'that He gave His only-begotten Son, that all who believe in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life.'<sup>17</sup>

**Devotions on the Passion.**—Because then (1) the redemption of man by Christ's Passion and Death was the principal end for which He came into the world, and because (2) we cannot obtain the benefits of that redemption without certain dispositions, which the consideration of His Passion is, above all things, calculated to excite

<sup>15</sup> Rom. v. 10.

<sup>16</sup> 'God commended His charity towards us, because when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8).

<sup>17</sup> S. John iii. 16.



in us, it has ever been the practice of Christians to make this the great subject of their thoughts. The Church has for this end encouraged many devotions connected with the Passion. From the earliest times it has been the practice to make the form of the Cross on things and persons as a sort of blessing to them, and as a constant reminder of the Passion of Christ. In every church, above every altar, in every confessional, the crucifix is set up in the most conspicuous place as a memorial of Christ's death. Throughout the year there are different feasts in honour of the Cross and the Passion. And the last fortnight before Easter is called *Passion-tide*, being set apart particularly for the commemoration of Christ's sufferings at the time of year when they took place. Many of the devotions connected with the Passion have for their special object to insure and assist the practice of meditation on it. In these the details and particular circumstances of Christ's Passion are enumerated and dwelt upon, such as the different instruments that were used in His Crucifixion,—the five principal wounds that were made in His sacred body,—the seven times He shed His precious Blood,—the three hours of fearful agony during which He was hanging on the Cross,—the seven words that He spoke during that time. There are, however, no forms of devotion on the Passion which are more largely used than the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross. Five of the mysteries of the Rosary are called the *Sorrowful Mysteries*, being, in fact, five points of meditation on the principal stages of Christ's Passion. These are to be pictured to the mind and dwelt on while the lips are engaged in reciting the Lord's Prayer or Hail Mary in connection with them. And the numerous indulgences which are granted to the recital of the Rosary cannot be gained unless, besides saying the prayers, the

mind of each person is engaged in at least some meditation, according to his ability, on the subject of the mystery.

**Way of the Cross.**—The devotion of the Stations, or Way of the Cross, took its rise from very early times. S. Jerome tells us that, in the times of the Apostles, the Christians used to visit the particular spots where each event of the Passion had taken place. Those who made pilgrimages to Jerusalem used, out of devotion to our Lord's Passion, to follow the road from Pilate's house to Mount Calvary, praying and meditating by the way at each station that was marked by some one of our Lord's sufferings. The Church encouraged this devotion, and granted numerous indulgences to the practice of it. But as there were comparatively few who could visit the Holy Land, the Church permitted the practice of erecting a series of crosses at intervals, in commemoration of the fourteen stations of our Lord's passage to Mount Calvary, and has granted the same spiritual advantages to them as to the practice of this devotion on the very spot itself. This is one of the easiest devotions for meditating on and realising the Passion of our Lord.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE FIFTH AND ELEVENTH ARTICLES.

MEANING OF HELL. ACCOUNT OF OUR LORD'S RESURRECTION; HIS DIFFERENT APPEARANCES; DOCTRINE CONNECTED WITH HIS RESURRECTION; PROOFS OF IT. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY; THE NATURE OF IT.

By our Lord's death His body was separated from His soul; but His Divine nature was not separated from either of them. The body that had been placed in the tomb was still the body of Christ, and the soul that had left the body was the soul of Christ. Where was that soul during the time that His body was in the holy sepulchre?

**Meaning of Hell.**—The Creed says, He, that is Christ, in His Divine nature, as well as His human soul, descended into hell. The word 'Hell' was commonly used for the grave or the lower regions<sup>1</sup> in general,—the place or state of the dead, wherever it was. And it is often used in Scripture in this sense. But as our Lord tells us there are many mansions in heaven, so there are different states of those who are dead. There was (1) the state of those who were waiting in prison, as it were, till they were liberated by the death of Christ. There is (2) the state of those who, though redeemed, yet cannot enter into the presence of God until they are purified from the habits and stain of past sins. There is (3) the state of those who have lived and died in enmity to God, and who are for ever separated from Him.

<sup>1</sup> 'He descended first into the lower parts of the earth' (Eph. iv. 9).

The first of these we now commonly call Limbo or prison-house; the second is called Purgatory or place of purification; and the third is what we now commonly mean by Hell, the place of the lost souls. Some theologians uphold the existence of a limbo of infants who die without baptism. The Creed, in speaking of our Lord descending into hell, does not specify which of these places our Lord went to on His death. But the reality and completeness of our Lord's death is shown, in that His body was buried and His soul departed like others to the state and place of the dead in the unseen world. The Church has not decided to which place our Lord went. Some have thought that He visited all three; but the common belief is that He went only to the first, where the souls of the Patriarchs and other just men were detained, waiting for their salvation till Christ should come and deliver them.<sup>2</sup> The mention of our Lord's descent into hell belongs to the account of our Lord's resurrection rather than to the article on His death, because it was in the other world that Christ's victory over sin and death began.

**Account of our Lord's Rising.**—It is generally thought that it was soon after midnight that our Lord rose from the dead. And it has also been commonly believed in the Church that when He rose He appeared first to His Blessed Mother. But this appearance is not recorded in the Gospels. S. Mark tells us of some holy women, who, when the Sabbath was past, came very early to the sepulchre, bringing with them sweet spices, that they might embalm the body of Jesus. On their way to the sepulchre they thought of the difficulty of removing the heavy stone that was placed on the door. But when they

<sup>2</sup> S. Peter is believed to teach this when he says that Christ in spirit—that is, in His soul—‘came and preached to those souls who were in prison’ (1 S. Peter iii. 19).

reached the place they found the stone rolled away. For, as S. Matthew tells us, 'there was a great earthquake, and the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. For fear of him the guards were struck with terror, and became as dead men.' The holy women looked into the sepulchre, and did not find our Lord's body; but afterwards saw two angels, who told them that He was risen. The other women went away, but Mary Magdalene lingered behind, and was weeping at not finding our Lord's body when He Himself appeared to her.

**His Appearances.**—This is the first appearance recorded in the Gospels. Afterwards He appeared to the other women who had been to the sepulchre. The next appearance was to S. Peter.<sup>3</sup> And then the glad tidings spread quickly abroad, the disciples telling one another, 'The Lord hath risen in truth, and hath appeared to Simon Peter.' Later on in the day He joined two disciples who were on their way to Emmaus, and who were talking about this wonderful report of His resurrection. They, like S. Mary Magdalene, did not know Him at first; but afterwards, when our Lord went into the house and sat at meat with them, they recognised Him. But He presently vanished out of their sight. The same evening He appeared to His Apostles (except S. Thomas) as they were gathered together in a room, the door being shut, and said, 'Peace be to you.' They were frightened, and thought it was an apparition; but our Lord showed them His hands and His feet, and said, 'See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.' Afterwards He asked them for food, and ate before them. This makes five appearances on the day of His resurrection. Besides these, there are six more that are recorded, and an account of three of these

<sup>3</sup> 'He was seen by Cephas' (1 Cor. xv. 5).

is given in some detail, one especially, when He appeared to seven of His Apostles at the Lake of Tiberias, and worked the second miracle of the draught of fishes, and gave S. Peter a triple charge to feed His sheep and lambs. But most likely our Lord was seen by His disciples many other times besides these that are specially recorded, as S. Luke tells us, in the Acts,<sup>4</sup> that 'He showed Himself alive after His Passion by many proofs; for forty days appearing to them, and speaking of the things of the Kingdom of God.' This is generally considered to mean that He instructed His Apostles during this time in the work of forming and governing His Kingdom,—that is, His Church,—giving them directions about the way they were to preach and to instruct men and to administer the Sacraments.

**Doctrine connected with our Lord's Resurrection.**—Ever since this great event Christians have kept Easter-day as the first and highest festival of the year, besides celebrating it by the observance of the first day of the week, on which it happened.<sup>5</sup> This they would do first on account of their great joy at our Lord's release from suffering and death,—His victory over His enemies, and His return to them. But besides this, it confirmed their belief and trust in Him. Whatever confidence they may have had in Him from seeing His miracles and hearing His wonderful discourses, yet if He had died and not risen again, how could they have known that He was more than a wonderful prophet, like Moses or Elias? But when they saw that though He died and descended into the grave, yet that the grave could not keep Him,<sup>6</sup> that He

<sup>4</sup> Acts i. 3.

<sup>5</sup> There are several notices in the Acts of the disciples meeting together to break bread on the first day of the week.

<sup>6</sup> S. Peter, in the Acts, says 'it was impossible that He should be detained by it,' the grave (ii. 24).

could of Himself rise from the dead,<sup>7</sup> then they had a firm ground for their conviction that He was no mere man, but God as well. Thus it is plain that the whole of Christian doctrine depends on this great fact: that our Lord not only taught men that He was God, but gave His disciples proof of this by rising from the dead.

**Proofs of the Resurrection.**—We can see what importance was attached to the Resurrection of our Lord (1) from the types and prophecies of His Resurrection.<sup>8</sup> Isaac was a figure of our Lord in this respect, coming back alive after his being given up by his father to be offered as a holocaust. So too was Joseph in being taken out of the pit in which he was put down by his brethren to die, and in being found yet alive after his garment was dyed in blood and he himself sold and carried away to Egypt, to be the means of preserving the life of his brethren. Our Lord Himself referred to the Prophet Jonas as a type of Himself in being restored to the land of the living after being three days and three nights in the whale's belly; and He repeatedly foretold His own death and Resurrection to His disciples, and told them to lay it to heart. When asked for a sign or proof that He came from God, He referred on one occasion to the sign of His being like Jonas the Prophet; and on another He said, 'Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will rebuild it.' This was made an accusation against Him at His trial, but the Evangelist expressly says He was speaking of the Temple of His body.

It must also be remarked (2) that though He often reproved His disciples for their incredulity and want of faith,

<sup>7</sup> 'Because I lay down My life that I may take it again' (S. John x. 17, 18).

<sup>8</sup> 'He rose the third day, according to the Scriptures' (Nicene Creed).



yet He vouchsafed to give them the strongest proofs of the reality of His Resurrection, and that over and over again. He appeared many times to them and to many different persons. He showed them the wounds He had received in His Passion. He told them to handle Him and feel Him, to convince themselves that He was not a mere apparition: 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me to have.' He even told S. Thomas to put his finger into the print of the nails, and He repeatedly asked for food, and ate before them to convince them of the reality of His human nature. The Apostles refer continually to the convincing proofs of His true Resurrection. They spoke of themselves as being the witnesses of this great truth, 'having eaten and drunk together with Him after He had risen again.' They are said in the Acts to have 'preached the Resurrection' because they insisted above all things on this great truth as that which was the great proof of our Lord's divinity to themselves and to the rest of the world. Men were called on to believe the Gospel because it was the teaching of God, and they knew Him to be God because He rose from the dead.<sup>9</sup>

**Christ's Resurrection the Proof of ours.**—There is another doctrine that is closely connected with the fact of our Lord's Resurrection, namely, our own resurrection; for we have an example in our Lord's own person of our human nature being raised from the dead, and raised in a glorified state. And this is an example of what He has promised to us as the reward of our serving Him: that He who raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken our mortal frames.<sup>10</sup> As to our soul, it is not unnatural or unlikely that it should continue to live after its separation from the body;<sup>11</sup> but

<sup>9</sup> 'If Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain' (1 Cor. xv.).

<sup>10</sup> Rom. viii. 11.

<sup>11</sup> See Chapter II. p. 10.

that our body, after being committed to the earth and sleeping in the dust, should rise again does not seem to us easy to believe or natural. It is, indeed, a supernatural reward promised to those who live here a supernatural life for Christ's sake. And Christ by His own Resurrection showed the possibility of it. He showed Himself alive to His Apostles, and gave proof to them of the reality of His body, and that it was the same body that had been nailed to the Cross and laid dead in the sepulchre ; and yet when it was before them, raised from the dead, they saw it with their eyes, they handled and felt it. And thus it gave them a living instance of our human nature being raised from the grave. Their hope was animated by seeing that our Lord had done in His own person what He promised to do for them. The Apostles went forth and taught the doctrine not only of the Resurrection of our Lord, but of the resurrection of the body.

**The Nature of our Resurrection.**—Moreover, our Lord's Resurrection not only gave a proof and instance of the raising of the body, but also showed the nature of it. This is a difficult subject to understand, and we are told very little about it. We are told in Scripture that we shall be raised incorruptible,<sup>12</sup> and that our body, which is sown (or put in the ground) an animal body, shall be raised a spiritual body. We do not know what a spiritual body is, yet we can understand something of its nature and qualities from what we read of our Lord's appearances after He rose again. Our Lord's body, after He rose from the dead, and as it is now in heaven and in the Blessed Sacrament, is a spiritual or glorified body. But this does not mean that it is not real, like an apparition or phantom. For it could be felt as well as seen. It

<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor. xv. ; Phil. iii. 21.

had the signs and marks of the unglorified body in which He suffered. Yet though it was real and tangible, and though He ate and drank before His disciples, yet He could enter the room though the doors were shut, and could again suddenly vanish from sight, and could be lifted up from the earth and raised to heaven. Our Lord seems to have been somewhat changed in outward appearance, since S. Mary Magdalene and the two disciples did not at once recognise Him, nor did the seven Apostles at the lake till S. John first perceived that it was He, and said to the rest, 'It is the Lord.' But this was only at first sight, as it is said afterwards that they knew it was the Lord.

The Church teaches that not only will the bodies of the just rise to life, but also those of the wicked;<sup>13</sup> and that as the former will see God in the flesh, so the latter will be cast body and soul into hell. It is remarkable that our Lord repeatedly warns His disciples that it is better to sacrifice anything—even a hand or an eye—rather than that the whole *body* should be cast into hell.

<sup>13</sup> Isai. v. 28.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE SIXTH ARTICLE.

#### ACCOUNT OF THE EVENT ; DOCTRINE CONNECTED WITH IT.

**Account of the Event.**—After remaining forty days on earth, our Lord ascended into heaven. The account of His Ascension is given to us in the Gospels of S. Mark and S. Luke, and in the Acts of the Apostles.

‘And He led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up His hands He blessed them. And it came to pass whilst He blessed them, He departed from them ; and while they looked on, He was raised up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And the Lord Jesus was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.’

‘And while they were beholding Him going up to heaven, lo, two men stood by them in white garments, who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up to heaven ? This Jesus who is taken from you into heaven shall so come as you have seen Him going into heaven.’<sup>1</sup>

‘And they, adoring, went back to Jerusalem with great joy ; and they were always in the Temple praising and blessing God.’

**Doctrine connected with it.**—But the Ascension of our Lord is not merely a fact in the history of our Lord’s life on earth. All that our Lord did had a meaning ; and this action of His Ascension was intended to teach His disciples some important truths :

1. Our Lord was not carried up to heaven in a

<sup>1</sup> The spot where our Lord’s feet are said to have last rested on this earth is still shown, being marked by a stone worn hollow by the lips of devout pilgrims.

chariot of fire like Elias ; nor by Angels, as it is believed that the Blessed Virgin was, after her death. The Apostles saw him go up of Himself, taking up his human nature, body and soul, into heaven. And this gave His Apostles an additional proof and assurance of His Divine nature, and confirmed their faith in Him.

2. It strengthened their and our hope of the supernatural reward He has promised to those who lead a supernatural life for His sake. It is difficult for us to realise that we, in our human nature, can be made fit for dwelling in the presence of God in heaven. But our Lord came to make us heirs of heaven, and to enable us to look forward with confidence to the possession of this reward.<sup>2</sup> He took up to heaven our human nature in His own person, before the eyes of the Apostles, and sat down in it and with it at the right hand of God. In this way our Lord perfected the work of our redemption, for which He came down from heaven.<sup>3</sup> Of course our Lord, inasmuch as He is Himself God, equal to the Father in all things, is not on the right hand of God, but on the throne of God Himself. But inasmuch as He is truly man, His sacred humanity is placed at the right hand of God,<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* in the highest place in heaven.

3. The Ascension of our Lord was, and is, a means to assist our love of Him. It is difficult for men such as we are to rise to the love of God, a Being so infinitely above us. To teach and help us to love Him He came down from heaven, that we might see Him as one of ourselves, and so come to know Him.<sup>5</sup> He condescended to divest

<sup>2</sup> 'I go to prepare a place for you' (S. John xiv. 2).

<sup>3</sup> 'I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do' (S. John xvii. 4).

<sup>4</sup> Eph. i. 20.

<sup>5</sup> 'Afterwards He was seen on earth, and conversed amongst men' (Baruch iii. 38).

Himself of His Majesty<sup>6</sup> of Being, and make Himself one of us, that we might not be afraid to come near Him and love Him. And then, having won men's affection, He returned to heaven, carrying with Him the thoughts and affections of those who knew and loved Him on earth. And Christ thus sets us an example in His own Person of the way in which alone it is possible for us to elevate our fellow-creatures, either in mind or condition. We cannot succeed unless by first coming down to them. We must assimilate our thoughts and feelings and ways of speech to theirs, so that they look upon us as having something in common with them, and belonging in a certain way to themselves; and then, having become like them, we can take them along with us, and make them like ourselves.<sup>7</sup>

4. In ascending to heaven our Lord Himself assigned reasons for His going: (1) 'I go,' He said, 'to prepare a place for you; that where I am, there ye may be.' 'If I go,' He said again, (2) 'I will send the Comforter, or Paraclete, to you.' Since it was in some way a part of His dispensation, or manner of dealing with His disciples, that the Holy Spirit should perfect the work He had begun by coming into their souls to sanctify them. Meanwhile (3) He Himself was going to fulfil another office in interceding for us<sup>8</sup> as our Great Mediator, offering to His Eternal Father the merits of His sufferings and death to atone for our sins.

<sup>6</sup> 'He debased [literally, emptied] Himself, taking the form of a servant' (Phil. ii. 7).

<sup>7</sup> 'He that ascended, what is it but that He first descended into the lower parts of the earth?' (Eph. iv. 9.)

<sup>8</sup> 'Always living to make intercession for us' (Heb. vii. 25); 'For Jesus hath entered into heaven itself, that He may appear now in the presence of God for us' (Heb. ix. 24).

## CHAPTER XIX.

### THE SEVENTH AND TWELFTH ARTICLES.

THE LAST JUDGMENT ; THE FOUR LAST THINGS ; THE PARTICULAR JUDGMENT ; PURGATORY ; PROOFS OF IT ; DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SOULS ; EVERLASTING LIFE ; FREEDOM FROM SUFFERING ; REALISING OUR DESIRES ; SEEING AND LOVING GOD. HELL ; PAIN OF LOSS ; POSITIVE SUFFERING ; HOW MERITED.

**The Last Judgment.**—When our Lord was leaving the earth, two Angels appeared to the Apostles as they stood watching the spot in the heavens where they caught the last glimpse of Him, and told them that ‘this same Jesus, whom ye have seen going into heaven, shall so come in like manner.’ Our Lord had already taught His disciples that the Son of Man was to come in majesty, and all the Angels with Him.<sup>1</sup> And the Angels put the Apostles in mind of this great truth, that Christ, whom they had just lost sight of, was to come again down from heaven, and visit the world ; but this time not in humility, to teach and save it, but attended by the Angels in glory, to judge the living and the dead. The Prophet Daniel who had a vision of the last days describes the last day : ‘ Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake ; some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, to see it always.’<sup>2</sup> S. Paul describes the coming of our Lord to judgment, saying that the Archangel of God shall come with great command, and shall sound the trumpet, and that in a moment the dead shall rise incorruptible.<sup>3</sup> S. John, too, saw a vision of the Judgment-day : ‘ I saw the

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxv.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel xii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 52 ; 1 Thess. iv. 15.



dead, great and small, stand before the throne ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged by those things that were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it ; and death and hell gave up the dead that were in them, and they were judged every one according to their works.<sup>4</sup> After all nations, both living and dead, are collected together, Christ will separate the good from the bad, and will set the good on the right hand, and the wicked on the left. And He Himself tells us that He will say to them on the right hand, ‘ Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom that is prepared for you ;’ for our Lord had told His disciples that He was going to prepare a place for them, that where He was they might be also. To them on His left He will say, ‘ Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.’ For it was not prepared or intended for men, but for rebellious angels ; and it is only through their following them that they come to share their punishment.

**The Four Last Things.**—This article, then, comprises in its explanation what are called in the Catechism *the four last things* ever to be remembered, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell, of which the Angels seem to have reminded the Apostles at our Lord’s Ascension. For there is nothing more certain than that we shall die, and after death we fall into the hands of God, not as our Father, but as our Judge.<sup>5</sup> This, too, is not only one of the four last things, but also one of the four first truths, that must not only be implicitly believed, but be explicitly known in order to salvation. For we cannot set our-

<sup>4</sup> Apoc. xx. 12.

<sup>5</sup> ‘ It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God’ (Heb. x. 31).

selves seriously to work to save our souls from hell, and to earn the reward of heaven, until we understand and realise that God will bring all our words and works, and even our thoughts, into judgment, and that He will reward the good and punish the bad.

**The Particular Judgment.**—The Church therefore teaches us not merely to remember that all men will be judged at the General Judgment, but that each one of us will be judged at what is called our own particular judgment. For it is certain that besides and before the general separation of good and bad at the end of the world, each one will be judged. When once the soul has left the body, it can no longer gain pardon or merit. All opportunity of altering its state before God is gone for ever. It has to stand before the judgment-seat of Christ and give an account of the things done in the body. So minute will this account be that our Lord tells us, on the one hand, that ‘every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account of it.’<sup>6</sup> And, on the other, that whosoever gives but a cup of cold water to any one for Christ’s sake, he shall not lose his reward. For our Lord shows particularly, in the account He gives of the Judgment, that being lost or saved depends no less on doing good works than on not doing bad ones. Moreover, account will be taken not merely of outward actions; but S. Paul tells us that God ‘is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart;’ and that when the Lord comes, He ‘will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels, *i.e.* the intentions, of the heart.’<sup>7</sup> Nor will the account be only of what we have done, but also of what we omitted to do. For we have each one of us duties, obligations, and responsibilities, according to our position in life, and we cannot omit the

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 36.

<sup>7</sup> I Cor. iv. 5.

duties of our state of life, or even be negligent about them without sin. In the description of the last Judgment given by our Lord, He represents Himself as condemning those on the left hand to everlasting punishment because they had not done works of mercy: 'I was hungry, and you gave Me not to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me not to drink: inasmuch as you did it not to the least of My brethren, ye did it not to Me.'

**Purgatory.**—Our Lord concludes His account of the last Judgment by saying, 'These (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting.' There is no mention of any state between the two. For, according to our life here, we declare ourselves God's friends or His enemies,<sup>8</sup> and the judgment that we go through after our death decides which we are. When therefore we speak of Purgatory as an intermediate state, it does not mean that there is any state of souls who are neither to be lost nor saved, but to remain midway between heaven and hell; but Purgatory, like Limbo, means a state in which those who are saved—'the holy souls,' as we term them—remain waiting, and being prepared to enter heaven. We may be found at the hour of death true servants of God, dying in His grace, and with all the guilt of our sins washed out by His Blood, yet with the effects of past sin on our souls—the effects of habits of and affections to sin, and the penalties of sin for which we have not done sufficient penance or made satisfaction. We may be God's true children, yet not without some defilement yet remaining from a worldly and unmortified life; and from this we must be purified, as nothing defiled can enter heaven.<sup>9</sup> We may be true soldiers of Christ, who have been fighting on His side

<sup>8</sup> 'He that is not with Me is against Me' (Luke xi. 23).

<sup>9</sup> Apoc. xxi. 27.

and against the enemies of God; yet we may have been wounded in the battle, and may require to lie patiently until our wounds are healed before we can join the ranks of those who are in the Church triumphant. Purgatory, then, is a state or place of preparation for heaven. And so the Council of Trent sanctioned the constant belief of Christians, defining that *there is a purgatory, and that the souls in it are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.*

**Proofs of it.**—There is a great deal to be found in pious books and lives of the Saints about the kind of punishment endured in purgatory, about its severity and duration; and many visions are narrated of souls that have appeared to those on earth, and described their own suffering and those of others. The Church does not condemn the opinions or convictions of her children on these questions, but she teaches, as a matter of faith, only that there is a purgatory, without giving the sanction of her authority to any particular idea of its nature. The existence of purgatory is made certain to us by the teaching of the Church; but there are, besides her authoritative decision, several reasons which help to make it clear to us. The chief of these is (1) the tradition of the Church, as it has been handed to us by the common belief and practice of Christians from the earliest times. (2) Our reason, though not to be trusted by itself as a safe guide in these matters, yet leads us to the same conclusion, since we cannot suppose that those who have led imperfect and sinful lives, though dying in faith and the grace of God, can be fit for heaven without some purification. And (3) there are several passages in Scripture which seem to refer to such a state, or at least to suppose it. The second Book of Macchabees relates that Judas Macchabeus sent a sum of money to Jerusalem, that sacrifices might be offered for those that had fallen in battle, and adds

the words that are quoted in the Catechism: 'For it is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sin.' We are told that God will render to every man according to his works, and that some shall be saved yet so as by fire. And this has been understood to mean, not only the fire of persecution in this world, but the cleansing fire of purgatory, which, while it does not consume those who are subjected to it, yet burns away all in them that is defiled or imperfect, as the dross is burnt away from the gold that is tried in the fire.<sup>10</sup>

**Devotion to the Holy Souls.**—The Council of Trent not only laid down that there is a Purgatory, but also that the souls in it are helped by the suffrages of the faithful. By suffrages are meant the prayers that are said for them, the almsdeeds, good works, and acts of penance that are performed in satisfaction for their sins, and the Masses that are offered in their behalf. The Church does not claim any direct power over the souls in the Church Suffering as she does, over the members of the Church Militant. She has not power to release souls from Purgatory, as she has to release them from the guilt of sin by absolution. All that she does, or directs her children to do, is by way of suffrage, *i.e.* imploring, entreating their release in God's good time, and as He sees they are fit for it. But God is infinitely merciful; He has promised to hear our prayers, and still more the prayers that are offered by the Church. He is pleased that we should love and help one another; and more than this, He has actually left us in this world to a great extent in the hands of our neighbours, and made our well-being and our relief from trouble and

<sup>10</sup> 'Gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of affliction' (Ecclus. ii. 5).

suffering dependent on the help they give us. In sickness, in accidents, in poverty, men can often do nothing for themselves; they must be lifted up and relieved by their fellow-men. And so it is with the souls in Purgatory. Dear as they are to God, and in the enviable state of being assured of their reward among the Saints, yet they are for the present lying helpless; they cannot do good works, or make satisfaction for their sins in any other way than by patient endurance under great suffering. But the Church teaches that they, like the sick and helpless in this world, are not out of our reach—that our suffrages will help them and do them good. She encourages, therefore, her children to have a devotion, *i.e.* a great veneration and regard, for these holy souls, and encourages the use of all sorts of prayers, pious practices, and good works intended for their benefit. The indulgences that we can gain may be directed, if we please, to make satisfaction for their sins instead of our own.<sup>11</sup> As it is reckoned as one of the seven corporal works of mercy to bury the bodies of the dead, so it is one of the spiritual works of mercy to relieve and give help to these equally helpless souls. It is a sort of good work that all can do, as it does not depend on having much time or means at our disposal. It is one that cannot miss its object; for the holy souls are not ever unfit objects of our charity, but most worthy of our pity and affection, and it is a good work that is certain to redound to our benefit in gaining us friends in the courts of heaven, to help us in our own time of need.

**Life everlasting.**—The twelfth article of the Creed teaches that not only are we to rise again, but that the life to which we rise is to have no end; and this is to be

<sup>11</sup> Pius IX. made all indulgences applicable to the souls in Purgatory.



so, whether we are saved or lost. Yet 'eternal' or 'everlasting life' is often used for 'everlasting happiness;' as when the young man asked our Lord, 'Good Master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?'<sup>12</sup> not meaning mere existence, but living hereafter in the happiness of heaven. This happiness is put before us as the object of our hope. Our Lord speaks of it in His Sermon on the Mount as a very great reward. He calls it 'the Kingdom' and the 'Kingdom of Heaven.' It is often called Paradise, because it was prefigured in the Old Testament by the Garden of Paradise, from which Adam was cast out when he sinned, but to which we are restored by the Blood of Christ. It was also typified in the Land of Promise, to which the Israelites were taught to look forward as the reward for serving God while in their passage through the desert of this world. It is also called the House of God, the New Jerusalem, and the City of God, of which S. John saw a vision, and of which we have a description in the last chapter of the Apocalypse.

**Its Nature. Freedom from Suffering.**—In what does the happiness of Heaven consist? Though it is above our present power to comprehend this fully, yet we may learn something of it by putting together what is told us in Holy Scripture on the subject. It teaches first that it is a state in which there are none of the things that cause us pain or annoyance in this world. For the first thing in order to be happy is to be free from suffering of every kind. In this world we cannot be happy, because we are subject to sickness, pain, sorrow from loss of property or friends, ill-treatment from others, solitude, overwork, poverty, destitution, suffering from heat, cold, storms and rain, besides the fear of these things lest they

<sup>12</sup> S. Matt. xix. 16.



should come, and especially the dread of death. But in heaven there will be a release from all suffering and all fear of it. This is the first characteristic of the Holy City that S. John describes: 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more; nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more; for the former things have passed away.'<sup>13</sup> And there will not only be a release from all outward trouble, but from all inward disturbance. The mind will enjoy profound tranquillity and peace, a gift that God gives in some measure to His servants even in this world.<sup>14</sup>

**Realising our Desires.**—But heaven is not only freedom from pain and trouble, but it is the enjoyment of happiness. By happiness we mean what satisfies the desires of the heart. These desires are very different in this life, according to our tastes, our characters, our age, our education; but we all agree in believing that we should be happy if our desires were all gratified. Men run eagerly after the fair and good things of this life, but often cannot get them; and if they do, they enjoy but a sip of them, and then lose them. Accident or sickness or old age or death soon takes them away. But God, who has given us a few of His gifts in this world, will give us many in the next, and also the opportunity to enjoy them to the full of our capacity. As the first Paradise from which man was driven is described as a place full of natural enjoyment, so is the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse described as having a great abundance of those things that men value most highly in this world, though they get but little of them. S. Paul, who had been himself carried up to the third heaven, speaks of the enjoyment not merely of such pleasure as we know or

<sup>13</sup> Apoc. xxi. 4, *ibid.* vii. 16.

<sup>14</sup> 'My peace I give to you' (S. John xiv. 27).

desire in this world, but tells us farther 'that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.'<sup>15</sup>

**Seeing and loving God.**—In this world there seems to be no natural happiness that is so good or satisfying as enjoying the presence and companionship of some one for whom we have a strong and lasting affection ; and this comparison seems to lead to a truer idea of the happiness of heaven than any other that we can understand in the present weak and imperfect condition of our mortal life. We naturally love those who love us,—those who have had a special regard for our welfare,—who have provided for our happiness,—who love to be with us. We love those who possess great and high qualities, such as beauty, intelligence, brightness, amiability ; and if those who possess these qualities are humble and unassuming and show regard for us, we cannot help loving them. Nor is affection a thing that wears out, or of which we ever grow tired. We continually see persons in this life who are completely wrapped up in affection for an object which has only some of these qualities. What must be the effect of seeing face to face a Being who possesses not a fragment of beauty and goodness, but the perfection and fulness of them ? The creatures of God that we most admire and run after here are those to whom God has imparted some sort of likeness—a scent or shadow—of His own perfections. We are attracted so powerfully to them, because they partake in a small measure of His goodness, His greatness, His loving nature, His humility, His perfect beauty. If we are so attracted to imperfect good, as we see it in this world, how overwhelmingly must the soul be drawn to the love of *the Supreme Good*,

<sup>15</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9.

that is, the Being who contains every kind of goodness and beauty in full perfection! And this is the explanation of what is meant when it is said that the happiness of heaven consists in the enjoyment of God. The Beatific Vision, or Vision of the Blessed, is to see God face to face as He is,<sup>16</sup> and to see God is to love Him with our whole hearts. God has given us desires and affections which can give us some little pleasure when they are gratified, but cannot make us happy, because they only gratify us partly or for a moment. But He has also given us a soul which craves after full happiness, and which is able to know God; and it is in the full knowledge of God that it finds its perfect happiness.<sup>17</sup> 'Our heart,' S. Augustine said, 'is made, O Lord, for Thee; and so it is unquiet and without rest till it comes to Thee.' This rest in the bosom of God, and being united to Him, is the essential happiness of heaven. It is a life of which, though eternal and everlasting, we can never grow weary, as we can never grow weary of having our heart's desire. But it is a reward which is far beyond our present nature and our present understanding. It is a supernatural reward to be gained only by a supernatural life.

**Hell, Pain of Loss.**—In proportion as we realise the greatness of the reward of the blessed in Heaven, we can also understand the misery of the lost in Hell. For hell is essentially and principally being shut out, and that for ever, from the joys of heaven. For men to see before them a place of infinite happiness, of all good and beauty, and to see others entering in to enjoy it while they are

<sup>16</sup> 'We see Him now in a dark manner, but then face to face' (1 Cor. xiii. 12).

<sup>17</sup> 'Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance: at Thy right hand are delights even to the end' (Ps. xv. 11).

excluded, left out in darkness and misery, without pity, sympathy, or hope, and this through their own fault—this is what is meant by the pain of loss. The Source and Author of all good has turned His back on them, because they in this world turned away from Him. Our Lord's words on this subject are more striking than any others : 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.'<sup>18</sup> 'They shall be cast out into the exterior darkness.' He says again, 'There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,' that is, grief unutterable and anguish of heart, to think what they have lost, and lost for ever ; and madness at the sight of those whom they scorned and derided in this world now exalted to such joy and glory above them.<sup>19</sup>

**Positive Suffering.**—But as the happiness of the just does not only consist in being without suffering, but also in the actual enjoyment of having all that they desire, so the punishment of those that do not fear or love God is not only the loss of Him for ever, but the endurance of positive pain and misery. To crave for things and not get them is what we mean by unhappiness ; and if the desires are strong and fierce, they are like a fire burning within the heart without ever being quenched or alleviated. But when the fire of hell is spoken of, it is the common belief of Catholics, though not actually an article of faith, that this fire is a material fire, or fire as we know it. Whatever is the nature of the fire of hell, the word could not be selected by our Lord except to express

<sup>18</sup> S. Luke xiii. 28.

<sup>19</sup> 'We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour : behold, how are they numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints !' (Wis. v. 4.)

a very terrible kind of suffering—as, indeed there is no sort of pain that is more excruciating than the burning of living flesh. And in the account of Dives and Lazarus our Lord draws a terrible picture of the tormenting pain of hell, as well as of the suffering of loss. ‘Lifting up his eyes when he was in torments, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.’<sup>20</sup> In more than one place our Lord speaks of this fire of hell as being unquenchable; and, on one occasion, when speaking to His disciples of the sin of scandal, He repeated this expression three times, as if to impress on them the terrible character of that punishment: ‘Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.’ S. John too, speaking in the Apocalypse of the lost souls, says: ‘The smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever and ever, neither shall they rest day or night.’<sup>21</sup>

**How merited.**—In speaking on this terrible subject we have, on the one hand, carefully to guard against any statements which would imply a forgetfulness of God’s being good and merciful over all His works—far more tender and forgiving than we can be—or of thinking that men could ever be condemned to so fearful a punishment for comparatively little faults, or such as they seem to fall into by chance more than malice. Faith teaches us that God desires the salvation of all men, and ‘so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son, that none might perish, but all might come to eternal life.’ But, on the other hand, sin, when complete, means nothing less than turning away from God; and as God is infinitely tender, loving, and merciful to His children, and forgiving to their

<sup>20</sup> S. Luke xvi. 24.

<sup>21</sup> Apoc. xiv. 10.

faults, so, if they turn from Him and will not know or love or serve Him, His just anger and indignation against them may be in some proportion to His former love. S. John says that God is love; but for those who will not have His love nor love Him in return, it must be 'a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.'<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Heb. x. 31.

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE EIGHTH ARTICLE.

THE HOLY GHOST IS GOD. HIS DESCENT ON THE APOSTLES ; TWO-FOLD EFFECTS. HIS DWELLING IN THE CHURCH ; AND SANCTIFYING EACH ONE. GRACE ; TWO KINDS OF IT. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST ; MIRACULOUS GIFTS. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE ; PROGRESSIVE DEGREES OF IT.

WITH the eighth article begins the third part of the Creed, which speaks of the third Person of the Blessed Trinity and of what He has done in regard to us. There are three things coming under consideration in this article : who the Holy Ghost is ; His coming down on the Apostles ; and how He sanctifies us.

**The Holy Ghost is God.**—In speaking of the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity it was shown that each Person was truly God, and equal to the others. The third Person is called the Holy Ghost, the word ‘ghost’ meaning ‘spirit.’ All three Persons are holy Spirits, but the first and second Persons are distinguished by other titles. The Holy Ghost too is sometimes called the *Comforter* or *Consoler*, and often the *Paraclete*, which has the same meaning. We use the word ‘spirit’ in so many different senses that we must be careful to remember that when we speak of the Holy Ghost as ‘the Spirit of God’ it does not mean merely the expression of God’s mind or will, but that the Holy Ghost is a Person equally with the Father and the Son. Macedonius in the fourth century denied that the Holy Ghost was God, but he was condemned at the General Council of Constantinople in the year 381. To inculcate this doctrine that the Holy Ghost is not



merely a Power or a Spirit, but a Person, the Nicene Creed enlarges this article as follows : 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who is adored and glorified with the Father and the Son, who spake by the Prophets.'<sup>1</sup> The Holy Ghost being here spoken of as one who gives life, and as having spoken to men by the Prophets, shows His distinct personality. God the Son was born of the Father before all worlds ; the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father<sup>2</sup> and the Son.<sup>3</sup> Yet He is adored equally with the Father and the Son. He is the same Lord and God as they are, and has all the same Divine attributes and perfections with them. Nor is He merely a Spirit ; He is *the* One great Spirit who is God. He is distinct from the Father and the Son, but He is the same One Spirit that they are.

**His Descent on the Apostles.**—As our Lord approached the time when He was going to leave His Apostles and return to heaven, He repeatedly spoke to them of the coming of the Holy Ghost after His departure. And He even spoke of its being for their benefit that He should leave them, because the Holy Ghost would come to finish the work He Himself had begun.<sup>4</sup> And just before His Ascension 'He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of

<sup>1</sup> 'Well did the Holy Ghost speak to our fathers by Isaias the prophet' (Acts xxviii. 25).

<sup>2</sup> 'But when the Paraclete shall come, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father' (S. John xv. 26).

<sup>3</sup> The words 'and the Son' were added to the Creed against the Greek Church, which denied that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Son.

<sup>4</sup> 'I tell you the truth : it is expedient for you that I go ; for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you ; but if I go, I will send Him to you' (S. John xvi. 7).

the Father, which you heard from My mouth.' 'You shall receive the Power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you.'<sup>5</sup> After they had seen our Lord ascend into heaven they returned to Jerusalem and continued in prayer, in expectation of the fulfilment of this promise. On the Feast of Pentecost, the fiftieth day<sup>6</sup> after the Passover and the Resurrection of our Lord, and ten days after the Ascension, they were assembled early in the day in an upper room, probably the same as that in which our Lord had celebrated the Last Supper; and as they were at prayer 'suddenly came a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming; and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were, of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak.'<sup>7</sup> This is considered to be the moment when the New Law, or the law given by Christ written on the hearts<sup>8</sup> and consciences of men, was promulgated. For as the children of Israel, after being delivered from the bondage of Egypt, passed through the Red Sea, and coming to Mount Sinai, received there the Old Law on the fiftieth day after the Passover, and this day was thenceforth kept as the Feast of Pentecost, so on the fiftieth day after Christ our Passover, the Lamb of God, had been sacrificed for us, the New Law was given to us through the coming of the Holy Ghost, who teaches and enforces the keeping of God's commandments in their spirit by His presence and influence on the heart. We still call the day on which this great event

<sup>5</sup> Acts i. 4, 8.      <sup>6</sup> The word means 'fifty.'      <sup>7</sup> Acts ii.

<sup>8</sup> 'Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not on tables of stone, but on the fleshy tables of the heart' (2 Cor. iii. 3).

happened the Feast of Pentecost, though it is also called Whit-Sunday, from an old word, 'whit,' or 'wit,' meaning spirit.

**Twofold Effects.**—The account of the descent of the Holy Ghost speaks (1) of the whole house where they were sitting being filled; and also (2) of the tongues of fire that sat on each of them. This represents the twofold work that the Holy Spirit came to do. He sanctifies us first through having taken up His abode in God's Church, of which we are members, and secondly by His personal work in the soul of each one of us. Like the heat of the sun, which diffuses itself everywhere, so the Holy Spirit sheds his influence into (1) the external Church, which is given us as the means of our sanctification, and (2) internally into our souls.<sup>9</sup> When we speak of receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, this does not mean merely that the Holy Spirit imparts a gift or grace of influence, but that the Father sends His Holy Spirit, who Himself enters into us and dwells in us, as the heat which ever flows from the sun falls on us and enters into our system. Let us consider these two works of the Holy Ghost separately.

**The Holy Ghost dwells in the Church.**—The Holy Ghost is the means of our sanctification, first, by His dwelling in the Church. As the Nicene Creed says that He spoke by the Prophets in old times, so it is He who now guides and directs the teaching body of the Church so as to keep it from error. Though our Lord formed the Church when He was on earth, making His Apostles to be its first rulers and teachers, yet He told them to wait for the promise He had given them of 'the Spirit of truth,' who was to lead them into

<sup>9</sup> 'The charity of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us' (Rom. v. 5).

all truth and abide with them for ever. This they did, continuing in prayer till the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit, the Life-giver, descended and '*filled the whole house*' where they were. Thus the breath of life was breathed into the Church our Lord had framed. It became a living Body through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, who still abides in her, and speaks now not through the Prophets, but through her; and it is because of the continued presence of the Holy Spirit in her that that she cannot err in what she teaches.

**Sanctifies each one.**—But when the Holy Ghost came down, He not only filled the whole house, but 'sat on each one;' thus signifying that He works our sanctification not merely through the whole body of the Church, but in the soul of each one in particular. For the sanctification of each soul means its being acted on by the Holy Spirit, and living under His influence. This is no figure of speech, but what a supernatural life actually consists in. It is no more a figure of speech than when we speak of the sun making trees and plants to grow. It is by their being in communication with the great source of light and heat that their inward powers are called forth into life and energy; and without this, they could not put forth leaf or bear fruit. So when left to ourselves and our own natural powers, we can do *no good thing*<sup>10</sup> towards our own salvation; that is, we are powerless to do anything supernatural, or deserving a supernatural reward, except under the influence and by the movement of the Holy Spirit, which, like the heat of the sun, is not cut off from its source, yet enters into the soul and dwells there. This supernatural or spiritual life is begun in baptism, by which, as our Lord told Nicodemus,

<sup>10</sup> I know that there dwelleth not in me—that is, in my flesh—that which is good' (Rom. vii. 18).

a man is 'born again of water and the Holy Ghost.' And the Holy Spirit, having entered into the soul, continues to dwell there.<sup>11</sup> This is the reason why our bodies are said to be the temples of the Holy Ghost,<sup>12</sup> who is cast out by mortal sin; for the Holy Spirit 'will not abide where iniquity cometh in.'<sup>13</sup> The Holy Ghost, therefore, it is who sanctifies men by His own presence and influence in the soul. This influence is often called sanctifying grace; the Holy Spirit is the Source and the Dispenser of grace: for though grace was purchased for us by the merits of our Lord's Passion, and so He is the Author of grace, yet He Himself said that He would send the Paraclete; and it is He who, by His presence and His gifts, does the work of sanctification in our souls.

**Grace.**—Grace is a subject somewhat difficult to understand, chiefly because the word is used in different senses. Grace means a gift—anything given 'gratis,' freely, or for nothing. Everything we have is really a free gift of God; but we are not accustomed to call God's natural gifts—such as light, air, breath, food—graces. The word is restricted to God's supernatural gifts. These supernatural gifts are some of them exterior and some interior; but the word 'grace' is generally used to express *an internal gift or help given by God to assist men to gain their eternal salvation.*

**Two Kinds.**—This gift or help is the influence of God the Holy Ghost in the soul of man. It is of two kinds—one is the continued, permanent indwelling of this influence in the soul, and which is therefore called *habitual* grace. It is this grace which makes us the sons of God and pleasing to Him, and which sanctifies the soul; hence this grace is also called *sanctifying* grace.

<sup>11</sup> 'Because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you' (Rom. viii. 11).

<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 16.

<sup>13</sup> Wis. i. 5.

So long as a man retains this grace, he is said to be in a *state of grace*. The other kind of grace, or rather the other way in which the Holy Spirit influences the soul, is by giving to it some special help for some particular purpose and for a time. This grace does not, like the other, belong only to the children of God; it may be a help given to the sinner to convert him, or to the unbeliever to lead him towards the true religion, or to a good Christian to help him under some special trial or temptation, or it may be obtained by prayer or a Sacrament to enable him to fulfil special duties, or to meet special emergencies. This passing help given for the time is called *actual* grace. Habitual grace is the presence of the Holy Ghost; actual grace is the help of the Holy Ghost.

**The Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost.**—The expression ‘gift of the Holy Ghost’ has two different meanings, which we must take care not to confuse. As our Lord spoke of sending the Holy Ghost, who proceeded from the Father, when He came down on the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, or on the first Christians, He is spoken of as being Himself *given* to us. But when we speak of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, we mean the gifts the Holy Ghost Himself gives to us—the *effects* of His coming to us,—the different ways in which He works in us. His influence on the soul shows itself in seven different ways, spoken of in the Prophet Isaias,<sup>14</sup> and these are called the seven *gifts of the Holy Ghost*. They are the spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, the spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and the spirit of the Fear of the Lord. In administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Bishop begins by invoking the Holy Spirit, and asking that He may impart these seven gifts or effects of His presence.

<sup>14</sup> Isai. xi. 2.



**Miraculous Gifts.**—Besides these seven gifts, the Holy Ghost gave to the Apostles and to others, who in those times were called on to do a special work, some special miraculous powers to enable them to do it, such as the gift of tongues or speaking different languages, the gift of working miracles, of prophecy, of casting out devils. These gifts differ from *the* seven gifts in this, that they are not given for the sake of the person who receives them, to sanctify *him*, but for the sake of others, to make an impression on them, to teach and guide them. S. Paul enumerates twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost—charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity.<sup>15</sup> By these are meant the results of the influence of God's Holy Spirit as shown in man's life and conversation.

**Nature of Spiritual Life.**—As the work of our Creation is attributed to God the Father, and that of our Redemption to God the Son, so that of our Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit. In order to be saved, our souls must be brought into a state of His favour, or be 'justified' in His sight. Now of ourselves, by our own power, we cannot get out of sin<sup>16</sup> into a state of grace; nor can we by our own strength 'do any good work towards our salvation.' This does not mean that men cannot have any goodness by their own natural exertions. There is a great deal of real goodness which is done by man's natural powers, and springs from the affections and feelings which God has implanted in man's heart, and this sort of goodness is not without its own natural reward. But to gain a supernatural reward of eternal happiness as the sons of God, we must have

<sup>15</sup> Gal. v. 22.

<sup>16</sup> 'In Thy sight no man living shall be justified' (Ps. cxlii. 2).



entered on a supernatural life, and, if we are adults, have done supernatural actions; and these being, as the word implies, above nature, cannot be done by our own unassisted powers. We must be raised to it and assisted by God, and this is the work of the Holy Spirit. Hence it is that the supernatural life is called a spiritual life, *i.e.* a life that is under the guidance and influence of the Holy Spirit. This spiritual life must begin by our being brought into the state of grace, and it consists in our 'walking in the Spirit'—that is, living in accordance with God's law; and this not for earthly ends or objects, but to please Him, and doing this by the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

**Its Progressive Degrees.**—There are men in every degree of the spiritual life, from those who have just begun it to those who are near perfection. The lowest state is (1) that of those who are making their first efforts to live a supernatural life by keeping God's commandments. For any serious breach of them, or of the strict commandments of the Church, grieves the Spirit of God, who retires from the soul. Venial sins do not deprive us of His presence, though, so far as they are wilful, they weaken charity, and impede the action of the Holy Spirit. The thing therefore (2) next in importance to being free from the guilt of mortal sin is to avoid and fight against all wilful sin. But the spiritual life does not only consist in removing obstacles to the working of God's Holy Spirit, nor only in praying and going to the Sacraments in order to obtain grace, but (3) in working with the Holy Spirit, or 'coöperating with grace,' as it is called. This is done by acting up to the dictates of our conscience, the inspirations and suggestions of the Holy Spirit, under the guidance of superiors and a spiritual director.

This being the nature of the Christian or supernatural or spiritual life, it will be observed that it consists, first, of the action of the Spirit of God on our souls, and secondly, of our own efforts in working with the Holy Ghost. Inasmuch as it must be begun and continued by the Holy Ghost, the explanation of it comes under the eighth article ; but in so far as it comes from our own efforts it comes under the first commandment, which enjoins the exercise of charity. The subjects of the Holy Ghost and of charity are inexplicably mixed up. Charity itself is a supernatural virtue which is a gift of the Holy Ghost, and charity is the basis and foundation of the spiritual life ; but nourishing charity, exercising it, and putting it into practice, is our own part of the work, and this is enjoined by the first commandment. It will therefore be more convenient to speak of the spiritual life in explaining charity.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE NINTH ARTICLE.

MEANING OF CHURCH ; DIVISION OF SUBJECT. THE KINGDOM  
FOUNDED BY OUR LORD ; TYPES OF THE CHURCH ; MEMBERS  
OF THE CHURCH ; GOOD AND BAD. HEAD OF THE CHURCH ;  
S. PETER THE FIRST VICAR OF CHRIST ; OFFICE OF THE POPE ;  
INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE ; PASTORAL OFFICE OF THE  
CHURCH ; INSTRUCTION AND ASSISTANCE ; THE COMMUNION OF  
SAINTS ; OBLIGATION OF BELONGING TO THE CHURCH ; MARKS  
OF THE CHURCH ; ONE ; HOLY ; CATHOLIC ; APOSTOLIC.

**Meaning of Church.**—The word Church means any assembly or congregation of people, either collected together or belonging to the same society or set of people. In the ninth article it means the particular society or community to which all Christians belong. But we often use the word to mean, not the whole society, but its rulers, as when we speak of the authority of the Church ; and still oftener we use it to mean the building in which the members of this society assemble together to worship God.

This article is divided into two parts ; but the second means the same as the first, and is a sort of explanation of it : we believe in the Catholic Church, *i. e.* the Communion of saints. And so the Catechism explains it as the communion or common ‘union of all the faithful’ (or, as they used to be called, saints) ‘under one head.’ Another catechism defines it more at length as ‘the congregation of all the faithful, who, being baptised, profess the same doctrine, partake of the same Sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head on earth.’<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Butler's Catechism.

When we profess our belief in the Catholic Church, it does not mean that we believe there is such a society or assembly in the world. Every one believes that. But what we express our belief in is, that this Church is not a human, but a Divine institution, framed and founded by our Lord to carry on the work He began on earth,—animated and filled by the Holy Spirit,<sup>2</sup> who came down upon it on the Feast of Pentecost, and has dwelt in it ever since, and will continue with it and in it to the end.

**Division of Subject.**—There are several points to be considered in this article. (1) The proofs that our Lord did set up such a Church, to which we must belong. (2) Who are the members of it? (3) Who is the Head? (4) What are the ends for which He set it up? (5) What are the characteristics or marks by which this Church can be externally distinguished from all other Churches or religious societies?

**The Kingdom founded by our Lord.**—Our Lord came into the world for two objects: to atone for our sins, and so to reconcile us to His Father; and secondly, to teach us the way to heaven. For this latter purpose He remained many years on earth, teaching first by His own silent example before He began His public life.<sup>3</sup> Then He went about preaching to the multitudes, and instructing those who believed in Him. His instructions were on what they were to believe and what they were to do, —Faith and Morals. Many of His instructions and discourses and parables were on matters of doctrine, and especially on ‘the Kingdom of God.’ He sent out His Apostles and seventy disciples to announce that the ‘Kingdom of God’ was at hand. He Himself often spoke of ‘the kingdom’ and ‘the children of the king-

<sup>2</sup> ‘And it filled the whole house where they were sitting’ (Acts i. 2).

<sup>3</sup> ‘Jesus began to do and to teach’ (Acts i. 1).

dom,' as in the eight Beatitudes. He instructed His disciples in the nature and character of this kingdom of God or of heaven, which was to appear or be set up; and one of the first things He did on beginning His public life was to appoint His twelve Apostles, whom He afterwards spoke of as the rulers of His kingdom.<sup>4</sup> He taught more about the kingdom of heaven than about anything else. What did our Lord mean by this expression? By a kingdom we commonly mean a country ruled over by a king; but when we say a country, it does not mean the land or territory, but the people who live in the country, and who acknowledge the king as their sovereign. And even if they do not live in that country, but in another, they still belong to their own king, and are his subjects. The kingdom of heaven and kingdom of God mean in the same way all those who acknowledge heaven as their country and God as their king, wherever they are living and in whatever state they may be. The Bible gives us the history of the one family who for a long time was the only one that acknowledged and obeyed God in the world. God rewarded this family for their faithfulness to Him by making them into a great nation. The Scriptures give us the history of this one nation of 'the people of God.' But a promise was made that from this one nation the knowledge of God should spread to all nations. And this took place when our Lord established a kingdom which consisted of all those, to whatever nation they belonged all over the world, who believed in God and gave themselves to Him. The kingdom of God or of heaven, then, means exactly what we call the Church—all the faithful, wherever they are, who believe in Christ and have entered into His obedience and service.

<sup>4</sup> S. Luke xxii. 30.

**Types of the Church.**—As Holy Scripture contains many types of our Lord, so it gives us some very striking figures of the Church which He was going to set up for the salvation of men.

**The Ark.**—One of the first of these was the Ark by which Noe and his family were saved from destruction by the Deluge. It was ordained by God as the one way in which men could be saved. All outside of it were lost. It contained both clean and unclean animals, just as the Church contains good and bad.

**Jacob's Vision.**—Jacob's vision of a ladder reaching to heaven was another type of the Church, which like it is the means of communication between earth and heaven ; the angels of God bringing down His gifts and graces on His servants, who are travelling like Jacob through the world, and carrying up before the throne of God their prayers and alms and good works.

**The Church in the Wilderness.**—The greatest type of the Christian Church was what S. Stephen the Martyr called the Church in the Wilderness.<sup>5</sup> This was the congregation of God's people, the Israelites, who were delivered by a great saviour from the bondage of a wicked tyrant, from whom they escaped by being led through the Red Sea.<sup>6</sup> Then they were under God's special guidance and protection, in the forty years of their passage through the desert, being instructed by His law, and guided by His light, and fed by bread from heaven, and defended through the power of prayer from their enemies, and brought on their way to the Promised Land. This is a very exact picture of God's treatment of His children under the New Law. They have been delivered by our Lord from the

<sup>5</sup> Acts vii. 38.

<sup>6</sup> This was a type of Baptism, which obtains its efficacy through Christ's Blood (1 Cor. x. 2).

dominion of sin and of the devil. They are fed and supported by the True Bread that comes down from heaven. They are instructed in the knowledge of God's will. They are led through the desert of this world, defended from their spiritual enemies, and brought on to the very border of the Land of Promise, which has been given to us for our inheritance hereafter. Lastly, as notwithstanding all that was done by God for His people, yet with many of them 'God was not well pleased,'<sup>7</sup> and they never entered the Promised Land, so the Church contains many who, though in it, and receiving all the graces and helps of it, yet do not profit by them, and never attain to the happiness of heaven because they do not act up to the Law of God and the graces He gives them.

**The Ark of the Covenant.**—Among the Israelites the seat and centre of God's presence was the Ark of the Covenant, which contained (1) the Covenant or Law, (2) the vessel of Manna, and (3) the rod of Aaron. This Ark of the Covenant is a very close figure of the Church, not as the assembly of the faithful, but inasmuch as it is a Divine presence and authority among us. For the Church as a ruling power possesses (1) the Law and Will of God to guide us, (2) the Divine Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, (3) and the true Priesthood to feed and guard Christ's flock.

**Members of the Church.**—These types then prefigured the setting up of the Church or Kingdom of God, and our Lord foretold its nature and character to the people in parables. But besides this He gave some particular instructions to His Apostles as to the way in which men were to be admitted into His kingdom and become its members. He had already described His Church under the figure of a marriage feast<sup>8</sup> to which 'many were called,'

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. x. 5.

<sup>8</sup> S. Matt. xxii.



the servants being instructed to go out into the highways and hedges to call as many as they should meet to the marriage. And just before leaving the world He commanded His Apostles to do this: 'Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.'<sup>9</sup> All who received—that is, believed—the 'word' or message of the Apostles were to be admitted into the Church by Baptism, and thus put into the way of salvation. For the Apostles were further desired to 'teach them to observe all things whatsoever He (Christ) had commanded them.'<sup>10</sup> The members then of Christ's kingdom are those who believe or have faith, and who are therefore called the faithful, and they are admitted as members of the Church by Baptism, which gives them faith of a supernatural character called the gift or infused virtue of faith.

**Good and Bad.**—This faith will not by itself save men, nor will their being members of the Church do so; but it puts them on the way of salvation, giving them both instruction as to what they ought to do, and help and grace to do it. But doing this—leading a good life by keeping the Commandments—having not only faith but charity, depends on themselves. While there are many 'called' into the Church, there are comparatively few who are 'chosen,' because they have lived up to their supernatural vocation.<sup>11</sup> This is what we mean by bad Catholics, those who have faith without charity or good works. Yet they do not cease to be members of the Church because they do not make use of the advantages they enjoy in her, or even because they abuse them. As a child may belong to a school and yet not learn, so a person may be one of the communion of saints and yet not be holy. Having once had the gift of faith, and been made a

<sup>9</sup> S. Mark xvi. 15. <sup>10</sup> S. Matt. xxviii. 20. <sup>11</sup> Philip. iii. 14.

member of the Church by Baptism, he can only cease to be a member by giving up his faith, or by being excommunicated. A person may leave the Church by apostasy, *i.e.* by openly seceding from her or himself, or by leaving her secretly because he has lost his faith. Or he may be turned out of the communion of the faithful by a decree of the Church, on account of his flagrant crimes and obstinate perseverance in them. This is called *excommunication*. Our Lord repeatedly explained to His disciples that the Kingdom of God on earth would have many bad members within its bosom, who would not be expelled till the Judgment-day. He likened it to a net cast into the sea, and gathering of every sort; and it is only when the net is drawn to the shore that the good are collected in vessels, and the bad cast away. He likened it to ten virgins<sup>12</sup> called to a marriage-feast, of whom half were foolish, thinking only of the present, and providing no oil to keep their lamps burning. And so, because their lamps had gone out, when the Bridegroom came they were excluded from the feast. He likened it to a field, in which there is good seed and tares or cockle growing together; and when the servants ask the master of the field to let them gather up the cockle, he forbids them, saying, 'Suffer both to grow together till the harvest; and at the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn, but gather up the wheat into my barn.'<sup>13</sup>

**Head of the Church.**—The Church or Kingdom of God is the congregation of Christians. Now every congregation or society of people has some head or ruling power. The Head of Christians is Christ, whose disciples they are, and after whom they are called. Our Lord likened

<sup>12</sup> S. Matt. xxv.

<sup>13</sup> S. Matt. xiii.

His Church to a fold, of which He was the Chief Shepherd<sup>14</sup> and His disciples were the sheep. In another place He said to His disciples, 'I am the Vine, and you are the branches.'<sup>15</sup> For the Church consists of those who are in allegiance to Christ as their Master, who live under His rule and in union with Him. But as in a state the real head is the sovereign, and the real head of an army is the general, and everything is referred to them, and done according to their commands—yet it is not done by them, but by subordinate officers, who do the work under them, while they are mostly out of sight—so in the Kingdom of God the real head is Jesus Christ, who is no longer visibly present, and the daily work of carrying out His commands and ruling His subjects is done by His Vicar and ministers. His Vicar, who acts in His place, is the Holy Father or Pope, who is the visible head of the Kingdom of God on earth. And with him are the other Bishops, who assist him in his work; and the priests, who are the ministers of God to look after each separate portion of Christ's flock. The Pope, Bishops, and priests are, then, the teaching and ruling part of the Church; and when people say 'the Church teaches,' 'the Church commands,' they mean the rulers of the Church, though really the Church consists of sheep as well as shepherds.

**S. Peter the first Vicar of Christ.**—We find by the Gospel history that, very soon after He began His public ministry, our Lord selected twelve of His disciples as the future rulers of His Church; and at the time He did so, He changed Simon's name into Cephas or Peter, signifying 'a rock.' Later on, towards the end of His ministry, when S. Peter made open confession of his belief, 'Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,' our Lord replied,

<sup>14</sup> S. John x.

<sup>15</sup> S. John xv.

‘And I say to thee, Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee will I give the keys of the Kingdom of heaven.’<sup>16</sup> Here our Lord promised to make him the head of His Church on earth; and after His resurrection He fulfilled the promise, saying to him three times, ‘Feed My sheep,’ ‘Feed My lambs.’<sup>17</sup> And that the office was not to be confined to him, but to descend to those who came after him, is shown from our Lord’s telling the Apostles that He would be with them to the end of the world. And so it was always understood, that he who succeeded to S. Peter was the head of the Church. As S. Peter became Bishop of Rome, whoever succeeds him as Bishop of Rome also succeeds him as head of the Church.

**Office of the Pope.**—As every society has a head, and the members of the society look to the head to settle doubtful questions and make or alter the rules, so the Church or body of Christians look up to their head to declare what is the true doctrine on all doubtful questions, and what is right practice. The greatest part of Christian belief and Christian practice has been handed on from the Apostles’ time to the present, people learning it at home or from their teachers, or reading it in the Scriptures or religious books, or hearing it in sermons or instructions. This general or universal belief handed down from one to another is called *tradition*. A great deal of this tradition has never been questioned or ‘defined,’ because every one has known what Christian belief and Christian practice is. But at different times new ideas have been started, and new doctrines taught; or doubt has been cast upon some of the commonly believed doctrines and practices whether they were true and right.

<sup>16</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

<sup>17</sup> S. John xxi. 15.

Then people went to the rulers of the Church and referred the question to them for their decision. We have an instance in the Acts<sup>18</sup> of a question being referred to the Apostles at Jerusalem, and decided by them. And later on there were many other doctrines and questions of faith which were considered by assemblies of the Bishops, called General Councils, with the Pope at their head. Whatever was decided or defined by them was accepted by all Christians as the truth, as they all believed that our Lord having declared that 'the gates of hell,'<sup>19</sup> *i.e.* the power of the devil, 'should not prevail against' His Church, and that 'the Spirit of truth should teach her all truth,' and that 'He Himself would abide with her for ever,'<sup>20</sup> was a promise of Divine help and protection, to prevent her rulers from ever going wrong or leading the members of His Church astray by false teaching. This is the meaning of the Church being 'infallible,'—that the rulers and teachers of the Church cannot err or go wrong in questions of Faith or Morals, *i.e.* in that which a Christian must believe and do in order to be saved. It does not mean that the rulers of the Church are the source of Christian doctrine and morals, or that they can, if they please, make new doctrines. The source of Christian doctrine and Christian practice is what Christ taught to His Apostles, and gave to them to preserve and hand down to future generations. This teaching of our Lord is found in the Gospels, in the Epistles, in the common belief of Christians, in the writings of history. The office of the rulers of the Church is not to make Christian doc-

<sup>18</sup> Acts xv.

<sup>19</sup> The word 'gates' is used as we use the word 'court,' when we say the Court of Rome. In Jewish times the kings used to sit and give judgment at the gate of the city (2 Kings xix. 8), just as our kings gave judgment in the courtyard of the palace.

<sup>20</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 8 ; S. John xiv. 16, 26 ; S. Matt. xxviii. 20.

trine,<sup>21</sup> but to preserve and defend it; and if any questions are raised about it out of men's reason, or Scripture, or history, or popular belief, the Church—that is, the teachers of the Church—have authority to decide these controversies, and to say what is the true interpretation to be put on the teaching of reason, history, and popular belief, and how far their arguments are to be listened to. Her office is to watch over and guard the whole of the faith delivered to her keeping by Christ, and to decide whether any disputed doctrine of faith and morals is or is not a part of that sacred deposit. In this teaching the Church is infallible. She is preserved by the providence of God from ever going astray in such a way as to teach what is erroneous as the necessary faith or practice of a Christian. And she is so infallible, not from the human wisdom or learning of her rulers, but because the Holy Spirit, who descended on the assembled rulers of the Church on the Feast of Pentecost, continues to dwell in the Church and to be her life, as the soul is the life of the body.

**Infallibility of the Pope.**—When it is said that the Church is infallible, we mean the rulers of the Church. But this does not mean that each priest or even Bishop is preserved from teaching error, but only the Bishops collectively in union with and under the supreme Bishop—the Pope. The Bishops would not be infallible if they defined a doctrine without the Pope; but the Pope, being the Vicar of our Lord, and standing in His place on earth, might define a doctrine without the Bishops, and that doctrine would be infallibly true. The Pope's infallibility

<sup>21</sup> 'Nor, indeed, was the Holy Spirit promised to S. Peter's successors in order that they might, through His revealing it, set forth new doctrines, but in order that through His assistance they might reverently guard and faithfully explain the revealed doctrines handed down by the Apostles, or, in other words, the true deposit of the faith' (*Vatican Decree*).



has been very clearly declared in the Vatican Council held in 1870. When it is said that he is infallible, it does not mean, as ignorant people sometimes think, that he is impeccable, or that he cannot sin. He depends on God's grace and his own coöperation with it, like other men. Nor does it mean that he can make no mistake in anything he thinks or speaks or writes as a private individual about matters of doctrine. But it means that when he speaks *ex cathedrâ*, *i.e.* from the chair of S. Peter, as Vicar of Christ and teacher of all Christians, and lays down the law, not on matters of science or politics or secular knowledge, but on a question of Christian doctrine or morals,<sup>22</sup> he cannot go wrong. This is called *defining* a doctrine, *i.e.* laying it down clearly, distinctly, and authoritatively. Good Catholics would of course pay the greatest attention to anything the Holy Father said on whatever subject he spoke, and in whatever way he said it, whether in writing or talking, whether in public or private; but there is no promise of his being infallible, except when he speaks solemnly as Pope.

**Pastoral Office of the Church: Instruction.**—This brings us (fourthly) to the consideration of the object and end for which our Lord united His disciples into a society under rulers, such as the Church is. The end for which we come into the world is to serve God and so save our souls, and the Church is a living institution established to aid those who are its members in this work. It is to make salvation more easily attainable. This it does first by its providing an easy and safe way of instruction that

<sup>22</sup> That is, the rule of what is right and wrong. It does not include rules of discipline, which are made for particular occasions, and are not binding on all people or at all times, but only as long as the authority that made them thinks it good to continue them.



we may know what we have to believe and do in order to be saved. It is the office and duty of the rulers of the Church to do this, and promise is made them of being kept from error in doing it. When once, therefore, we are admitted into the Church of Christ, we are His sheep, and are under the care of the chief shepherd, to whom He said, 'Feed My sheep.' From him, and those that assist him, we are able to learn the truth, both as to what we are to believe, and what we have to do. Our Lord set rulers over His Church that all who belong to it might have an easy means of knowing how to save their souls. Before the institution of the Church it was very difficult for any one to know what was the true religion, and for the poor and uneducated it was almost impossible. Our Lord began a new thing in the world<sup>23</sup> by preaching the Gospel to the poor, and He provided for their continuing to be taught, after He left the world, through the Church which He set up. Even now, with all the knowledge and education there is in the world, it would be very difficult for people to learn religion by themselves through reading the Bible or other books. But by means of the Church it is easy for any one, who tries, to learn what he must believe and do in order to save his soul. In every country there are priests educated to teach and preach Christian doctrine, and ready to instruct those who desire it. This is the first great benefit that we get through the Church.

**Assistance.**—But the Church also provides its members with means and helps towards salvation. For though the knowledge of God and of His will is the first

<sup>23</sup> Jeremias foretold this as one of the great blessings of the new Covenant—that God would make with man, that 'all should know Him, from the least even to the greatest' (Jer. xxxi. 34). Our Lord gave it as one of the proofs of His Divine mission that 'the poor have the Gospel preached to them' (S. Matt. xi. 5).

step towards our salvation, this is of no use unless we practise what He commands, and this is often difficult. Our Lord has provided that in His Church we should have many helps towards a good life. The Church is not only like a great University that promotes knowledge by giving all sorts of opportunities for learning, but it is like an army which trains men to be soldiers. The Church trains those who wish to save their souls by guarding them from what is dangerous, by constantly reminding them of their duties and gently enforcing their observance, by warning and advising them when they are going wrong, and by giving them every help and facility in the practice of virtue, by rules of discipline and practices of piety, and by administering Sacraments to them by which they obtain not only outward help, but inward strength to act up to God's commandments, and graces suitable to the special conditions in which they are placed. Thus the Church, by its rulers and teachers, not only gives the knowledge of the way of salvation, but it gives help to walk in that way. It provides us with the *means of salvation* and sanctification.

**Communion of Saints.**—But this instruction in what we have to do, and help to do it, are not the greatest things that the Church does for us. It brings its members into the society and fellowship of those who are aiming at the same thing with ourselves, and this makes it possible to do, in the company of others, what we could not do by ourselves.<sup>24</sup> Thus we are not only helped by the rulers of the Church, but by the other members of the Church. We must not think of the Church as a congregation or company of people who are merely collected together in one place or for one object, but are

<sup>24</sup> 'A brother that is helped by a brother is like a strong city' (Prov. xviii. 19).

independent of each other and acting each one for himself. It is much more like an army of soldiers, who all belong to one king and country, and are fighting against the same enemies and for the same objects. In an army no one acts by himself; all act in concert under their officers. They could never have strength under their privations and difficulties unless they helped each other, nor courage to march against the enemy unless they stood by one another. When they are fighting they fight together. If any one fall wounded, the others pick him up and take care of him in his helpless condition. Those who have gone on and gained a victory rejoice together, and make their success redound to the advantage and glory of those who are still behind. So it is with the Church. It is not only a number of Christians, but a *body* of Christians, like an army. The members are not independent of each other, but united together by belonging to one kingdom,—the kingdom of God; by having one aim,—the gaining of the reward promised to those who are victorious; by having the same enemies to fight against, and by having the same means for fighting, and the same leader and head to command them. The members, like the soldiers of an army, may be in different conditions,—either still engaged in fighting on earth, or lying wounded and suffering in Purgatory, or having gained the victory and enjoying the fruits of it in heaven; but in whatever condition they are, they are still members of the same Church, and are bound to stand by and help each other. The particular way in which they do this depends on what others stand in need of and what each has it in his power to do. We are bound to help those who are suffering and in want, whether they are in this world or in Purgatory. There are seven corporal works of mercy or different ways of relieving bodily wants, and

seven spiritual works or good works done to the soul And according as the members may need assistance in one way or another, we are to do what we can for them. As the soldiers of an army will stand by one of their own body and will not suffer him to be in want,—as the members of a family love and care for each other, rejoicing in each other's success, sympathising in each other's sufferings, and helping each other's necessities,—so our Lord ordained that the members of His Church should do.<sup>25</sup> They are to be united by charity, *i.e.* loving each other and showing that love by sympathy and help. The Catholic Church is explained by the words, 'the Communion of Saints,' since the Church of Christ is the union of the faithful in one body, and this not by having one faith only and one hope, but by mutual fervent charity. The third, then, and greatest benefit conferred on us by our Lord in setting up His Church is that we obtain the aid and encouragement of serving Him through not being left by ourselves, but by belonging to a Society of persons who are all engaged in the same work with ourselves: we are each one of us one of the Communion of Saints.

**Obligation of belonging to the Church.**—From this we can see the two great reasons why every one is bound to belong to this Society or Communion of our Lord's disciples which we call the Church. The Church is an army of His followers called out of the world and at variance with the world. The Church and the world are two hostile camps. Our Lord says, 'He that is not for us is against us.'<sup>26</sup> As soon as we come to see this we must take one side or the other. We are bound, then, as a part of our duty to God as our Master and King, and

<sup>25</sup> 'If one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member' (1 Cor. xii. 26).

<sup>26</sup> S. Luke xi. 23.

out of love to Him as our Father, to be always on His side, to be loyal to Him. Whatever our personal deficiencies may be, out of weakness, ignorance, or even carelessness, yet it cannot but be a great point for us that we should be members of His own family, 'the Church that He loved and for which He delivered Himself up,'<sup>27</sup> and not be found in the company of the enemy's camp.

And secondly, for our own sake ; for since Christ has set up His Church not to make salvation more difficult, but more easy, by calling men into a society of those who have the salvation and sanctification of their souls as the main object of their lives,—a society that has teachers to instruct them how to do this, and rulers to guide and keep them in the work, and Sacraments to give them strength for it, and even renewed grace when they have failed in it,—how can any be excused who do not take advantage of this great assistance that is offered to them? God is not prevented, because He has established a Church, from saving, if He so pleases, some who do not belong to it. But it is not likely that He should give special and extraordinary graces to those who reject the ordinary ones He has provided as the means of our attaining to everlasting life. He has ordained the Church as *the* way to heaven,<sup>28</sup> as the Ark of Salvation which saves those who enter it from destruction. And so in the Acts of the Apostles we read that the Lord added daily to their society, *i. e.* to that of the Apostles, such as should be saved.<sup>29</sup>

**Marks of the Church.**—On one occasion our Lord foretold to His disciples that there should rise up false

<sup>27</sup> Eph. v. 25.

<sup>28</sup> 'And thine ears shall hear the word of one admonishing thee behind thy back : This is the way ; walk ye in it, and go not aside, neither to the right nor to the left' (Isai. xxx. 21).

<sup>29</sup> Acts ii. 47.

teachers who should try to deceive His people, and lead them to believe that Christ and His religion were to be found with them.<sup>30</sup> And we see this fulfilled in our own days. There are now a great many different forms of Christianity and sects of Christians, and each sect claims to be the purest and truest form of our Lord's Church. So that many persons are now to be found who profess to believe that our Lord set up a Church, a Communion of Saints, but who say, Which is it? Here are multitudes of Churches: which is the true one? Which comes from that one which our Lord set up? For this is the question. Sometimes men argue that their Church or sect is the true one, because the doctrine it teaches is the true one; but our Lord set His Church to teach people what the true doctrine was, so that we must first know which is the true Church, before we can know which is the true doctrine. Others argue that their Church is the Church of Christ because their people are so good; but even if it were true, as they suppose, that their people are not only good, but better than those of other Churches,—which is a very difficult thing to determine,—yet this will not make their Church the true one. There may be brave men in the army of the enemy, and fighting on the wrong side; and so there may be good men even amongst heathen nations, and still more amongst different Christian sects. When we say about one of these that it is not the true Church, we do not mean that everything which those who belong to it believe is false, and that all which they do is wicked. On the contrary, they most of them possess a great deal of doctrine which they get from the Catholic Church, and believe as we do; and they have kept up a great deal of Christian morality and practice, and often are very conscientious in acting up to it. They

<sup>30</sup> S. Matt. xxiv. 5.



most of them acknowledge our Lord as their Master and Teacher; and they believe that He set up a Church, and would belong to it, if they saw which it was; but from some cause or another they do not see which is the true Church. Now if we study the meaning of the ninth article of the Apostles' Creed we shall find that it gives some rules to help men in finding out the true Church, —some marks by which we may know the Church our Lord set up from other Churches.

**One Church.**—The ninth article says, 'I believe in *the* Holy Catholic Church.' From the earliest times Christians spoke of *the* Church, showing that there was only one. And the Nicene Creed puts this word in, saying, 'I believe in *One* Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.' We often hear people speaking now as if there were many religions, and all of them good, and many Churches that have come down from our Lord; but the old belief was that there was only one, and could only be one. Our Lord said that there should be one Fold under one Shepherd.<sup>31</sup> Nor is it possible to think that these different sects of Christians can all belong to one Church or make up one Church. For they have different names or denominations, they differ in what they believe, and that in several very important points, such as what is necessary for salvation, as well as in a great many lesser ones. They do not acknowledge any one authority, and in some cases they have persecuted one another. But every one acknowledges that on all matters of faith the members of the Catholic Church believe the same, and are under the same head, often deriding them for this very thing, and saying that they *must* believe the same doctrine because they all obey the Pope. There is no difference among Catholics as to what is necessary for salvation. Every

<sup>31</sup> S. John x. 17.



one can see that the sects are different from one another, that there is no unity or agreement between them; and everybody knows that Catholics everywhere do agree. They all obey one head, they all believe the same doctrines, and follow the same practices as the means of salvation. It is clear, then, to our common sense that (1) there is and can be but one true Church, and that (2) there is oneness, or unity, in the Catholic Church.

**Holy.**—The Church has already been explained to be an institution founded by our Lord, and this, (1) if there were no other reason, would entitle it to be called Holy. Yet it might have been holy in its origin, and yet have degenerated and fallen from its ‘first estate.’ This, indeed, is what is pleaded by some schismatics as a reason for leaving her. But the body of the Church has not only been framed by our Lord, but (2) the Holy Ghost descended on her on the day of Pentecost and filled her, dwelling in her ever since as her inward life and indwelling soul. And it is because of the Church being not only a divinely founded, but a living, institution, which the Holy Spirit dwells in, animates, and directs, that she is, and always must be, Holy. Then (3) she is justly called Holy, because her end and object is to teach, promote, and enforce holiness. She stands up for the principles of holiness, and maintains the standard of holiness. She gives help of all sorts to those who desire to be holy. She encourages holiness of life, and venerates those who are holy. And (4) she consists of those whose profession is to live a holy life. If they do not mean or intend to do this, they are out of place in belonging to her. Her members are ‘called to be saints.’<sup>32</sup> The Church herself is called the Communion of Saints,—not that all in her are saints, any more than all the students in a place

<sup>32</sup> 1 Cor. i. 1.

of learning are themselves learned ; but they come there to learn, and a great many do learn. But just as there is no making people learn if they will not exert themselves, so the Church cannot *make* her members holy in spite of themselves ; for what is not done freely and willingly is not holiness. But she does all she can to make her members holy, and does succeed in making a great many so. The Church is, in fact, a garden for holiness, giving space and opportunity and encouragement to those planted in it to grow in holiness. They do not enter the Church because they are holy, but in order to become so. Those who are imperfect as yet may go on to perfection ; even those who are sinful may yet be converted and repent. We see by the parable of the wheat and the tares that our Lord not only contemplated the mixture of good and bad in His kingdom on earth, but that He taught those who would at once root up the tares to wait and be patient. ‘Suffer both to grow until the harvest ; and at the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into My barn.’<sup>33</sup> Yet in another parable He gives a terrible warning to those who, being ‘planted in the courts of God’s House,’<sup>34</sup> will not produce the fruits of holiness.

**Catholic.**—The plainest mark or note of the true Church, by which it is distinguished from all other churches, is that she is the Catholic Church. This is what she was called in the earliest times, and this is what every one calls her now ; nor is there any other body of Christians that is called the Catholic Church. If a man says he is a Catholic, every one knows what he means. Since we profess in the Apostles’ Creed our belief in

<sup>33</sup> S. Matt. xiii.

<sup>34</sup> See the parable of the barren fig-tree (S. Luke xiii.).

the Catholic Church, we condemn ourselves unless we belong to that Church and are Catholics. But why is the true Church called Catholic? Catholic means universal, or for every one. When our Lord set up His Church on earth, He made it to be a Church for all nations and for all times. Before that time there had been the Jewish Church, which had been set up by Moses under God's command; but that Church was a national Church, set up for one nation, the Jews, and was only to last for a time. But when our Lord had chosen the Apostles to carry on the work of founding His Church, and had instructed them in the things that belonged to it just before He ascended into heaven, He sent them out to preach the Gospel and to establish His Church over all the earth. He did not any longer restrict the Church to one nation; but said to them, 'Go ye into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every creature; and behold I am with you always to the end of the world.'<sup>35</sup> Thus our Lord Himself made His Church to be universal,—for all nations and for all ages to the end of the world. So this became the characteristic of Christ's Church. It was different from the Jewish Church, which was for one particular nation. Our Lord's Church was Catholic, or for all nations.<sup>36</sup> And this is still the difference between Christ's Church and other Churches. There are many Churches in the world, such as the Greek Church, the Scotch Church, the English Church, the Russian Church. All these Churches are Churches belonging to particular nations; but the Catholic Church is not for any particular nation more than another. It is for all nations; and its members are to be found in almost every nation.

<sup>35</sup> S. Mark xvi.

<sup>36</sup> This was prophesied of the Church by Isaias: 'All nations shall flow into it' (Isai. ii. 2).

Wherever you go you find Catholics. In the parable of the grain of mustard-seed our Lord taught His disciples that the characteristic of His Church was that, though it took its rise from so small a beginning, it would grow and spread through the world till the great ones of the earth took shelter under its protection.<sup>37</sup>

**Apostolic.**—The fourth descriptive mark of the true Church is that she is Apostolic. ‘I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.’ Apostolic means belonging to the Apostles, and being the same as theirs. Our Lord founded the Church; but He began its foundation by appointing twelve Apostles,<sup>38</sup> whom He especially instructed in all that belonged to His Church,<sup>39</sup> the doctrine they were to teach, the sacraments they were to administer, and the manner in which they were to rule the members of His Church. And so, when our Lord left the earth, as soon as the Holy Ghost had come down on the Apostles, they set forth to do as our Lord had commanded them, to set up and spread the Church. All those who joined the Church continued in the doctrine of the Apostles;<sup>40</sup> when any question or dispute arose, it was referred to the Apostles and those whom they had ordained to help and succeed them.<sup>41</sup> Thus it was a clear description of the Church in those days to call it the Apostles’ Church, or the Apostolic Church. That Church has gone on from their time till now, and has still the mark of teaching the Apostles’ doctrine and following their traditions. There are several Churches now that claim to be Apostolic; that is, to have succeeded to the Apostles’ Church. But even if they claim

<sup>37</sup> S. Matt. xiii. 31.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Built on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets’ (Eph. ii. 20).

<sup>39</sup> Acts i.

<sup>40</sup> ‘And they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles’ (Acts ii. 42).

<sup>41</sup> Acts xv. 4.

this for their own Church, they do not deny that the Catholic Church is Apostolic too. It is a fact that is clear and admitted that the Pope and Bishops of the Catholic Church have come down by a regular succession from the Apostles. As our Lord ordained and sent out His Apostles,<sup>42</sup> so they ordained and sent out others to preach the same doctrine and administer the same sacraments; and these again ordained and sent out others, and so down to the present time. This is the meaning of what the Catechism says: 'The Church is Apostolic because she holds the doctrines and traditions of the Apostles, and because through the unbroken succession of her pastors she derives her orders and mission from them.' That is, the holy orders or ranks of the clergy, and the right of sending them out to preach and teach after they have been ordained.

A person who believed and studied these descriptive marks of the true Church, given in the Creeds,—One Church, which is *Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic*,—and then looked at the different Christian Churches or sects, would not long be in a difficulty as to which answered best to this description. He might find some Church that had one or more of these marks; but as there is, and can be, but one, the only one that has all the marks is the one that everybody calls the Catholic Church.

<sup>42</sup> 'As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you' (S. John xx. 21.)

## CHAPTER XXII.

### THE TENTH ARTICLE.

MEANING OF SIN ; MALICE OF SIN ; IMPERFECT SIN ; NATURE OF MORTAL SIN ; EFFECTS OF SIN ; STATE OF SIN ; FORGIVENESS OF SIN ; SACRAMENTS OF THE DEAD ; CLASSIFICATION OF SINS ; PARTICULAR KINDS OF SIN.

THE tenth article teaches that sin can be forgiven,—that is, that God has provided means by which we may obtain forgiveness of them in this life. But to understand clearly how far and by what means sins are forgiven, we must consider (1) what is the nature of sin, and (2) why it is so great an evil, (3) what are its effects, and (4) what different kinds of sin there are.

**Meaning of Sin.**—We can easily understand the nature of sin from our own experience in early life. We were brought up at home, by our parents or guardians, who loved and took care of us. But they taught us that we must do what they told us, and we learned that whenever we did not mind their commands, but preferred to do our own will, they were displeased or offended with us ; and though they still continued to love us, and look after our welfare, they punished us. Later on, we came to know that everybody was under obedience to the commands of the Government, which were called Laws, and that if men disobeyed these laws, they would be taken before the magistrates and tried, and then punished. Then Religion taught us that we have another and higher Father in heaven, who loves and cares for us, and who has told us His will. We know what He desires us to do

and not to do; and if we do not obey Him, but act in opposition to His will, it displeases and offends Him. God is not only our loving Father, He is also our Master and King. He has made laws for all to observe, and if we break them, we shall be tried and judged, and punished for what we have done. Sin, then, means to offend and displease our Father in heaven. It means breaking His laws. When a man breaks the law of the country, it is called a crime or an offence. If he breaks the law of God, it is most commonly called a sin.

**Malice of Sin.**—Why is it that sin is so wicked? What is the wickedness, or, as it is sometimes called, the *malice* of sin? It is so wicked, first, because the mischief the sinner is doing is very great. Look at a railway train running along, how smoothly and pleasantly it goes! But if a person were to put a big stone on the line it might upset the train, and the carriages might be broken in pieces, and the passengers, instead of getting to the place they wanted to go to, might be injured or killed. In the same way, a single sin very often does immense mischief and harm to other people and ourselves. Then sin is wicked because it breaks the commands of God. If some one has broken the law, people look on him as very wicked; they call him a criminal; they are curious to see him, and look on him with horror because he has committed a crime; and they have a sort of curiosity to see a man who will have to suffer a great punishment. But a man who commits a great sin has broken the laws, not of earth, but of Heaven. And it is not the magistrates or the Government that have caught him, and are going to punish him, but it is the Sovereign Lord of all things, the King of kings whom he has offended. It is He who will bring him to trial; and the punishment of sin is hell.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The wages of sin is death' (Rom. vi. 23).



And that which makes sin to be so wicked is, that it comes from a man not caring about God. For when a person does something that he knows God has forbidden, he shows that he loves something else more than he loves God ; that he cares to please himself more than he cares to please God. He puts himself, or something else, before God. And as God is the Highest above all things, infinitely great, and infinitely good, and the Being that made and preserves and loves us as His own children, to turn away from Him, and turn to something else instead,—to choose something else before Him,—to care to please ourselves more than to please Him,—this is what sin really is, and it shows us that it is a very wicked thing.<sup>2</sup>

**Imperfect Sin.**—But a person may say: ‘I did not know this ; I did not know that what I was doing was a thing that was strictly forbidden by God. I thought it was only a little thing, that would not displease Him, or, at all events, not much ; I did not intend to offend God. I was careless and thoughtless, and did not think of what I was doing.’ In this case the sin is not full and complete, it is imperfect. It has not all the qualities of sin. For sin consists essentially of a bad intention. It means knowing that a thing is highly displeasing to God, and yet being willing to commit it, and not caring whether we displease Him or not. This is the meaning of the distinction between mortal sin and venial sin. The difference is really very great, though sometimes it seems to be very small. There is the same difference about those things that do harm to the body. Slight diseases and wounds injure the body ; but a grievous wound or disease will kill it. Yet sometimes there seems very little difference

<sup>2</sup> ‘That sin by His Commandment might become sinful above measure’ (Rom. vii. 13). ‘He shall convince the world of sin’ (S. John xvi. 8).

between a wound that is slight and one that is deadly, and sometimes those that cause very little pain, and do not show much, are the most fatal. Yet what an immense difference there is between a mortal wound and one that is not mortal! Men would sooner receive fifty slight wounds, or even severe ones, from which they could recover, than one that is mortal. So there is this immense difference between a mortal sin and a venial sin: that mortal sin destroys life,—the supernatural life of the soul,—and venial sin does not. And it is better, therefore, to be guilty of a hundred venial sins, and to continue still to be the children of God in His grace and love, than one mortal sin, which would make us lose His love, and forfeit the privilege of being His children.

**Nature of Mortal Sin.**—Now mortal sin has this terrible effect of destroying the grace and love of God in our souls, because it is *wilfully* offending God by doing something that we *know* is *very displeasing* to Him. Observe the three things here spoken of, because if any one of them is wanting, the sin is incomplete, and falls short of being a mortal sin. If the action was not done wilfully, however bad it might be in itself, yet there would be no bad will or intention, but only carelessness or thoughtlessness. If the action was done wilfully, but without full knowledge that it was wicked, or forbidden by God, then it would not be an intentional offending of Him. And if the thing done, though done wilfully and with full knowledge, is something trifling in character, the person only consenting to do it because it is trifling, then there is no intention of offending God mortally. The thing done must be a matter of some consequence, so as to be a clear and real and grievous infringement of God's law. Sins, that in any of these three ways fall short of an intention to offend God, are only incomplete sins,

which do not separate us from God, and, as being more readily pardoned by Him, are called *venial*. We must not, however, suppose that because a bad *intention* is that which makes mortal sin, that *attention* to what we are doing is always necessary. For when we get accustomed to do things, we do them, and intend to do them, though we are not thinking about them. And so it is about sins. At first, a person could not intend to offend God without thinking about it at the time. But he may get into a habit of committing a sin, just as he may get into any other habit, and then he goes on doing the sinful action, without recollecting at the time that he is offending God ; *but if the person knows that it will offend Him*, and yet does it all the same, he cannot get out of the guilt of sin, because he was not thinking of God at the time, but only of his own gratification.

**Effects of Sin.**—By the effect of sin is here meant the effect on the sinner himself. When a person offends God, first there is the *guilt* and stain of sin on his soul. A person might commit a great crime, say murder, and might not be found out ; yet he would be guilty of it all the same, and would carry about with him the sense or feeling of having done the wicked action, and that God knew that he had done it. This is the first effect which always follows from sin. Secondly, there is the *punishment* that belongs to sin, and that always follows upon it. This punishment is of two kinds, one of loss, and the other an infliction of pain. As when a man commits murder, he loses the good opinion and favour of others, and is disgraced in the eyes of the world ; and besides this, he is condemned to die. So when a man is guilty of a mortal sin, he is punished by the loss of God's love and favour, besides being condemned to suffer punishment in hell. Thus the effect of Adam's sin when he ate the for-

bidden fruit was, first, the guilt and stain of sin on his soul ; and it was his consciousness of his guilt which made him seek to hide himself. But he also lost the favour and love of God, being stripped of the sanctifying grace with which God had clothed him. He became by his sin one of Satan's followers, and in opposition to God. And thirdly, he was punished with actual suffering, being cast out of Paradise, and made liable to poverty, labour, sickness, and death. Venial sin has, like mortal sin, a guilt and stain, though of a very different kind from mortal sin. We do not lose God's favour or love by it ; but it weakens the effect of God's grace in the soul, and if continued in leads to mortal sin, and it is punished with temporal sufferings, though not with eternal.

**State of Sin.**—Though an act of sin may be committed in a moment, yet the effect of the sin does not pass off of itself, but continues until it is taken away. If the sinful act has been a grievous or mortal sin, it leaves a man without God's grace, and then he is said to be in the *state of sin*. Before he committed it he was in the *state of grace*. Venial sin, because it is not complete sin, does not put a man out of the state of grace. And in that state he can, because he possesses the grace of God, do different good actions of prayers, almsgiving, mortification, and charity, which will obtain forgiveness of the venial sins, *if he is sorry for them*. But if he is in the state of sin, he cannot do any good work that will gain him a future reward. Mortal sin kills the soul, and the sinner, like a man who is dead, cannot help himself. He requires some supernatural assistance to raise him up from that state. An act of perfect contrition would, indeed, restore him to God's favour and love. He can pray earnestly for help to make such an act, and do his best, too, to have a sorrow of this sort. But it is very difficult

for those who are in a state of sin to make an act of this sort. Those who are habitually loving God, if they fall suddenly into a great sin, may be able to do it. But most commonly those who are in a state of sin are persons of careless life, who do not habitually love God, but themselves; and then it is extremely difficult for them to rise out of the state of sin by their own efforts.

**Forgiveness of Sin.**—It is for this reason that our Lord, who came to destroy sin and its effects, not only took away the sin of the world by shedding His Blood to wash it away, but opened in His Church a Fountain<sup>3</sup> of His Blood, as a means by which His children might always have a ready means of rising out of the state of sin. This is what we profess our belief in, by the tenth article,—that ‘Christ left to the Pastors of His Church the power of forgiving sins.’ The Nicene Creed enlarges this article into ‘I believe in one Baptism for the remission of sins.’ The Sacrament of Baptism is the first and most perfect means of obtaining pardon for sin. But it is not the only sacrament for sin. If we fall into sin after Baptism,—since there is only one Baptism, and we cannot receive it again,—another sacrament is provided—that of Penance, by which we may be raised out of the state of sin. Thus while forgiveness is not impossible to any, it is rendered easy to those who comply with the conditions on which Christ offers it in His Church. This is one of the greatest blessings enjoyed by the members of the Church,—the assistance, not only against falling into sin, but of being raised out of it.

**Sacraments of the Dead.**—These two sacraments, by which sinners can be raised out of the state of sin, are

<sup>3</sup> ‘There shall be a fountain open to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner’ (Zech. xiii.).

often called Sacraments of the Dead. For they have the power of giving or restoring supernatural life to those who are without it. In this respect they are alike, but in other respects they differ. For Baptism can only be received once, while Penance may be received repeatedly. Baptism remits not only actual sin, as Penance does, but also takes away the stain of original sin. Both remit the eternal punishment incurred by grievous sin, but Baptism also remits the temporal punishment due to any sin that has been committed. Lastly, Baptism does not depend for its effects on the efforts of the recipient in the same way that Penance does.

**Classification of Sins.**—Sin is an offence against God. The first such sin committed in the world was when Adam and Eve offended God. We are said to be guilty of this sin, because the stain and disgrace and loss of sanctifying grace which our first parents incurred descends on us their children. It is because we owe it to them, from whom we take our origin, that it is called *original* sin. But when we commit any act of sin ourselves it is called actual sin. We ourselves are the guilty persons. So that original sin is not a different kind of sin from actual, *but we are guilty of it in a different way*. Original sin we inherit from others,—it comes to us from our origin; but actual sin is our own doing. Actual sins, or those we commit ourselves, are classified in different ways. They may be divided in the way already explained, (1) into mortal sins and venial sins; (2) into sins of omission and sins of commission; the first consisting in neglecting to fulfil some duty laid on us by the command of God, like sanctifying the Sunday, and the second in doing something which He has forbidden, like committing murder or theft; (3) into sins of thought, word, or deed, according to the different ways in which they are omitted



or committed ; for sin is an offence against God, by any thought, word, or deed. We must observe what this means. For it does not mean that one of these ways excludes another. Every sin must begin with a thought, and the mere coming of the thought into our mind is not a sin. Sin begins when a person takes pleasure in the thought of some sin, instead of driving it out. But this is so far only a venial sin. If he goes on to consent to the thought, and gives way to the desire to commit the sin, then it may be a grievous sin. For if he is really willing to offend God grievously, he does offend Him, although the sin has not gone further than the thoughts. If after the sinful thought he goes on to say what the sinful thought put into his mind, it is a sin of word ; if he puts what the thought suggests into execution, it then becomes a sinful act or deed. Thoughts, words, and deeds are very often degrees of sin rather than kinds of sin. A sin of thought means a sin that is one of thought only, and has not been carried out into action. A sin of word means when the thought has gone as far as words, but not as far as a deed. But a sinful deed or a sinful word includes in itself a sinful thought, and some degree of consent to it.

**Particular Kinds of Sin.**—Besides these divisions of sin, there are some different kinds of sin having a special character about them. Such (1) are the sins the Catechism enumerates as *crying to heaven for vengeance*, like wilful oppression of the poor, because the Scripture speaks of them as being especially hateful to God, and rousing His anger and indignation. Worse still than these are (2) the six sins *against the Holy Ghost*, which many persons have believed to be unpardonable. But this is not quite true. The reason why these sins are peculiarly dangerous is not because they are too great to be forgiven, if they are repented of, but because they



stand in the way of our repenting. Conversion to God and leading a spiritual life is the operation and influence of the Holy Ghost in the soul. If, therefore, a man sets himself in any way against being influenced by the Holy Ghost, he cuts himself off from the only means by which he can turn to God. Thus a man who resists truth after he knows it, and is convinced that it *is* the truth, or one who intentionally keeps himself from yielding to the influence of the Holy Ghost, is guilty of this sin ; and it is difficult to see in what way he can be converted.<sup>4</sup> (3) The Catechism reminds us that we have not only to be on our guard against our own sins and vices, but also against *being partakers in the sins of others*. There are nine ways in which we may be guilty of this. Some of these, like counsel or command, implying a full knowledge and consent ; others, like concealment and silence, are sins into which people might easily fall from good-nature and kindness of heart. Yet this would not prevent them from being sins. It is a part of our duty to try to keep others out of sin as well as ourselves, and not to be deterred from trying to do this because it is disagreeable and often difficult.

The Catechism gives the seven capital sins in connection with other kinds of sin ; but as these are not exactly sins, but the sources of sin, or different kinds of *vices*, it will be more convenient to speak of them in connection with the spiritual life.

<sup>4</sup> The Pharisees were guilty of this sin, when, not being able to deny the truth of our Lord's miracles, they attributed them to the power of the devil. See S. Mark iii. 30.

## Part the Third.

### THE COMMANDMENTS.

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#### CHAPTER XXIII.

##### THE LAW OF GOD.

MEANING; NATURAL AND REVEALED LAW; MORAL LAW AND POSITIVE LAW; THE OLD LAW; THE NEW LAW; ENFORCED BY CONSCIENCE; DIVISION OF THE COMMANDMENTS.

**Meaning.**—The first of our duties to God is to believe what He makes known to us. The second is to do what He commands; and this is a necessary condition for attaining to the life everlasting which is spoken of in the twelfth article of the Creed. When, on one occasion, a man asked our Lord what he must do to inherit eternal life, our Lord answered: ‘If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.’ Sin, we are taught, is the one thing that separates us from God; and sin is offending God by any thought, word, or deed against the law of God. A law means a rule of conduct imposed by a superior. We call it *human* law, if it is imposed by an earthly superior; but if it is a law that comes from God, it is *Divine* law.

**Natural and Revealed Law.**—As God is our Sovereign Lord and Master, if we know that He desires or wills anything, it is our bounden duty to fulfil it. We may come to know the will of God in different ways; but however

we come to know it, as soon as we do know it, it is a law to us. The Gentiles in old times, and heathen nations now, may know something of God's will from the nature of things. God, who made the world and what is in it, has given us the power of seeing by the light of our own reason how He wills it to be used.<sup>1</sup> The will of God found out in this way is called the *natural* law. But God never left His own people with only the natural law. From the earliest times He revealed His will. The first Commandments God gave were against murder, and for the observance of the institution of marriage and of the Sabbath. Later on, He gave Commandments to Noe, after the Deluge. Whatever God has revealed in a supernatural way to His servants is called the *revealed* law. Thus the law of God is natural or revealed, according to the way in which we come to know it.

**Moral Law and Positive Law.**—We must, however, observe that the things which God has commanded are of two very different kinds. There are some things that are, as we say, right in themselves. God is good; that is His nature, and He could not therefore command us to do anything that was bad. God has made us and given us the nature we have, and He could never will us to go contrary to what He Himself has ordained. Therefore, because God cannot change, the law of right and wrong, or what is called the *moral* law, cannot change either. It must be in accordance with God's nature. This law is therefore sometimes called the *eternal* law. It is what God, who is eternal, always wills—what is pure, just, holy, and true. What is contrary to these is forbidden by God, and must always be forbidden, because it is, as we say, wrong in itself. But besides this there are some things that are not wrong in themselves, but

<sup>1</sup> Rom. i. 20.

only wrong because God has forbidden them at particular times, or to particular persons, or under particular circumstances. So long as God forbids them they are wrong ; but if He ceased to forbid them, they would not be wrong any longer. Thus God gave Commandments to the Israelites, not about matters of right and wrong only, but also about what they were to do in the desert and in the Promised Land, and a great many rules about offering sacrifices and about the public worship of God and ceremonies. These were not laws on matters of right and wrong given to all people everywhere, but they were particular precepts or commands to the Israelites, enjoining certain observances to them in particular. They were not given to every one, nor to be observed at all times and everywhere. These particular commands of God are often called *positive* precepts, or positive law, which means a law laid down for particular circumstances, and not a part of the moral law. The law of God, then, is divided into the moral law or positive law, according to the nature of the things commanded.

**The Old Law.**—Though from the very beginning of the world men knew something of God's law, yet the greatest revelation of God's will in old times was given to the Israelites after they came out of Egypt. It consisted chiefly of the Decalogue<sup>2</sup> or Ten Commandments given by God from Mount Sinai. It was on the fiftieth day after the Israelites had left Egypt that God spoke these Commandments to them from the top of the mount. The people had prepared themselves for three days by Moses' command, and on the morning of the third, 'behold thunder began to be heard and lightning to flash, and a very thick cloud to cover the mount, and the noise of the trumpet sounded exceeding loud, and the people that

<sup>2</sup> 'Decalogue' means ten words or sayings.

was in the camp feared.<sup>3</sup> Then it was that God spoke the Commandments. These Commandments were called the covenant or testament. After they were spoken they were also written on two tables of stone, which were kept in a chest or ark of precious wood called the Ark of the Covenant. They were called the Covenant, because by God's desire they were to be regarded as a solemn agreement or covenant between God and His people. He promised to be with them to protect them, and they promised to observe these Ten Commandments faithfully. After the Commandments were given this covenant was ratified with blood, which Moses took and sprinkled with it the book of the law and the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you.'<sup>4</sup>

**The New Law.**—This covenant, then, was called the Old Law, or the law of Moses, given by God on Mount Sinai. The New Law is that given by Jesus Christ, which is what we live under. Yet we must not suppose that the old law is done away with. The particular precepts given to the Israelites about their sacrifices and ceremonies, and their way of living in the desert and in the Promised Land,—the obligation of these has ceased. But the Ten Commandments belong to the moral law, and they bind us now as strictly as they did the Israelites. The difference is, not that we have to keep them less, but more. Our Lord taught His disciples that He had not come to abolish them, but to fulfil them.<sup>5</sup> He explained them one by one, and showed how they were to be kept, not merely in the dry letter, but according to their spirit and intention, more fully and perfectly than

<sup>3</sup> Exod. xx.

<sup>4</sup> Heb. ix. 19.

<sup>5</sup> 'Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil' (S. Matt. v. 17).

before. They were to be observed not only in great matters, but in small ones. This was one (1) difference between the new law and the old; but (2) another and greater one was the way it was to be enforced. The old law was enforced by fear. It was given in a way that struck terror into the people. And the punishments for breaking it were very severe: the first persons who broke the second and third commandment were stoned to death, those who broke the first and sixth were put to death by thousands. But the new law is not enforced by punishments, but by each man's own conscience. Christians are taught to observe the Commandments, not because they fear the penalty of not doing so, but because they have the fear and love of God in their hearts. S. Paul says, that under the old law the Commandments were written on tables of stone, but under the new law they are written by the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of the heart.<sup>6</sup> Our Lord taught men to love their neighbours, and that doing so they would not only keep the Commandments, but keep them more perfectly.

**Enforced by Conscience.**—The new law is enforced by our own inward sense of what is right and what we ought to do. This inward sense is called conscience, which, when once we know the law of God, reminds and admonishes us to keep it, and reproves us when we do not. But conscience can only act on what it knows. It will not do instead of instruction in God's law. For it is guided by the law. It is the law that enlightens the conscience to dictate rightly.<sup>7</sup> We must, therefore, be well instructed in the Commandments and their meaning, so that, having that knowledge in us, our conscience may

<sup>6</sup> 'Giving My laws in their hearts and in their minds, I will write them' (Heb. x. 16). See also 2 Cor. iii. 3.

<sup>7</sup> 'Thy word is a light to my paths' (Ps. cxviii. 105).



enforce a right law, and not a false and wrong one. A complete understanding of the Commandments as Christ taught them is essential to leading a good life.

**Division of Commandments.**—The Commandments, as they are given in Holy Scripture, are not divided one from another, and so there have come to be different ways of dividing them. The ancient Fathers of the Church divided them differently from one another. The Catholic Church has followed the way which S. Augustine and others followed. But Protestants have followed the way in which they are divided by the Jews. This way divides the two parts of the first Commandment into two distinct Commandments, and joins the ninth and tenth together, though they forbid sins of a very different kind. There are also different ways of classifying the Commandments. Thus, we may distinguish (1) between those that command and those that forbid; or (2) we may divide them into those that are directed against sins of thought only, the ninth and tenth; those that are directed against sins of words, the second and eighth; and the remainder, which go beyond these, to sins of action. (3) But the most common and useful classification is that which is implied by their having been written on two tables of stone. It seems to be generally understood that those on the first table concerned our duty to God, and those on the second our duty to man.

It will be observed also that the Commandments follow one another in a certain natural order, dealing first with our highest duties to God, then with subordinate duties to Him; next with the highest duties we owe to man, viz. those that concern our superiors; and then proceed to those that concern our neighbour in general, in the order of their importance, ending with those that concern ourselves only. Some of these speak of one



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kind of sin only, as murder and adultery ; but our Lord explained these and other Commandments in such a way as to show that His disciples are to keep, not only from the worst, but also from the lesser sins that fall under each Commandment, and such as lead up to the worst sins.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### FIRST COMMANDMENT—VIRTUE OF FAITH.

ACKNOWLEDGING GOD, AND NO ONE ELSE ; DIVISION OF SUBJECT ; WORSHIP OF GOD BY FAITH ; LEARNING WHAT GOD HAS TAUGHT ; BELIEVING IT FIRMLY ; AND PROFESSING IT.

**Acknowledging God.**—Faith—*i.e.* believing in God, and that He has revealed things to us—is the foundation of religion. For a man would not know or care about religion unless he believed in God, and that He observes what we do, and will reward or punish men according to their works. We must have faith before we come to learn the articles of the Creed and the Commandments of God. And so the Commandments do not begin by telling us that there is a God, but by calling us to attend to Him, to remember that He is over us, and to fulfil our duty to Him. If we know that some one is set over us as our master or superior, we know that we have to respect and obey him. We call men to a remembrance of their duties in this way. A father will say to his children, ‘I am your father,’ for they know what follows from this. So when God spoke the Commandments from Mount Sinai, He began in this way, ‘*I am the Lord thy God.*’ He called their attention to His being their Creator and Sovereign Master. And He added, ‘*Who brought thee out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage,*’ to remind them further of the love and gratitude they owed Him as well as duty. What, then, are the duties which we owe as a matter of course to God because He is God, our Creator and Master? What are the duties we owe to

Him because He is a God of love, our Father and Benefactor? Our own heart and conscience are to answer; for we all understand what is due to our earthly masters and to our parents, and so we know well enough that nothing less, but a great deal more, must be due to the King of kings, who is the Supreme Ruler of us and all men, and who is not a mere earthly parent, but our Father in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

King David used this argument in the 94th Psalm: 'Come, let us adore, let us fall prostrate before God, let us make humble supplication before the Lord who made us; for He is the Lord our God, and we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.'

**Acknowledging no one else.**—This Commandment has a second part, which is looked on by the Jews and others as a separate Commandment. It goes on: 'Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me,'—that is, no other gods beside the one true and living God. But the Church takes these as different parts of the one great Commandment to glorify God as God.<sup>2</sup> The first part, 'I am the Lord thy God,' calls on us to pay Him Divine worship, to adore Him as God. The second, 'Thou shalt not have strange gods,' forbids us to acknowledge any one else as God, or to give this Divine worship to any one else but Him.

**Division of Subject.**—All our duty to God is, then, comprehended in this Commandment. This duty is made up (1) of interior worship, and (2) of exterior worship. The interior worship means a right attitude of

<sup>1</sup> So the inspired prophet appeals in the name of God to the disobedient Jews: 'The son honoureth the father and the servant his master. If I, then, be a Father, where is My honour?' (Malach. i. 6.)

<sup>2</sup> 'Because that, when they had known God, they have not glorified Him as God' (Rom. i. 21).

mind and heart towards God, or our whole soul being rightly disposed. We know what is meant when a person says that his heart is right. He means that whatever may be thought of his exterior conduct, his dispositions and affections are what they ought to be. The dispositions and affections with which we honour God are Faith, Hope, and Charity, which are therefore called *Theological virtues*, that is, virtues directed to God. All true worship of God proceeds from these virtues. Other virtues are good, and highly important for our own welfare and the good of society. But these are the ones by which we worship God directly or immediately. Interior worship, however, is not enough. We are also bound to honour God by exterior worship,—which means, that our worship of God must not be confined to ‘our heart being right,’ as men say, but that we must show it by external actions. Exterior worship will not do without interior worship; but exterior worship is very pleasing to God when it proceeds from right dispositions, and it is a great help towards cultivating and increasing these dispositions. Exterior worship is often called *Divine worship*, or sometimes *religious service*, sometimes the *virtue of religion*. Now there are many things to be considered, both under the head of interior and exterior worship. Under interior, there is the worship of God by faith, and also the sins opposed to faith—*infidelity*, *apostasy*, and *heresy*. Secondly, the worship of God by hope, and the sins opposed to it—*despair* and *presumption*; and thirdly, the worship of God by charity, the way of exercising this, and the sins opposed to it. Under *exterior* worship, the different ways in which God is worshipped externally; and secondly, the three different kinds of irreligion—(a) neglect of religious worship, (b) abuse of sacred things, and (c) superstitio, which is a perversion of religious worship. Lastly,

there are the sins that come under the second part of the Commandment, 'Thou shalt not have strange gods,' by which it is forbidden to give Divine worship to any one else besides God, whether to those who are worthy of some worship,—as Saints, Angels, Relics, Crucifixes,—or those who are not worthy of any,—as evil spirits or idols. It ought, however, to be kept in mind that all these sins, as well as all sins against religion, are also sins against the interior worship of God by faith, hope, and charity, principally against faith; for external acts spring from internal dispositions, and as external acts of religion are pleasing to God because they spring from good dispositions, so external acts of irreligion offend God for the very reason that they come from a bad disposition towards Him.

**Worship of God by Faith.**—In the interior worship of God we must begin by faith. How do we worship God by faith? If a man does *not* believe in God, he cannot worship Him by faith. But if he is convinced that there is a God, and that God has spoken to man, either through Nature or Revelation, he ought—every one can see it—to value very highly everything that is the voice of God or the word of God,—everything that he has reason to believe God is making known to him. He will show this right disposition just in the same way that a dutiful, humble, affectionate child would listen to the words of his father. He will exercise his faith towards God, first, by diligence and pains in finding out whatever God reveals or has revealed to men. If God has spoken, what has He said? He resolves to learn it. Secondly, by believing whatever he is convinced that God has revealed. It may be new, strange, incomprehensible, and opposed to his ideas of what is possible; but, once convinced that God has said it, he bows down in homage, and wor-

ships God by following His words rather than his own understanding.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, by maintaining and upholding the truth that he has learned,—standing up for it as the truth of God when it is impugned.<sup>4</sup>

**Learning what God has taught.**—The sins against faith are when we fail in one or other of these duties. In the first way it may be committed by those who are not members of the Church, if, having a belief in God, and in His having made a revelation, they do not take pains to inquire into the truth of things which their conscience tells them may concern their salvation and their duty to God. Our Lord reprov'd the Jews repeatedly for not examining the Scriptures and learning the truth about Himself.<sup>5</sup> In so important a matter as our salvation, and what God requires of us, it is sinful if men do not take the trouble to read, study, and think, with the view of finding out the truth. They cannot be excused if they will not take any pains about the matter. Their ignorance is their own fault.

Not only those out of the Church are often guilty of this sin, but also those who are in it, when they neglect the study of Christian doctrine. For the knowledge of Divine things requires to be kept up, just as the knowledge of human things does. The difficulties about faith, and the temptations against it that people are liable to, are very often caused by insufficient instruction and superficial knowledge. Many have never been grounded in

<sup>3</sup> 'Bringing into captivity every understanding to the obedience of Christ' (2 Cor. x. 5).

<sup>4</sup> 'How does a person sin against faith? By not endeavouring to know what God has taught, by not believing what God has taught, and by not professing his belief in what God has taught' (Dr. Butler's *Catechism*).

<sup>5</sup> 'Search the Scriptures; for you think in them to have life everlasting, and the same are they that give testimony of Me' (S. John v. 29).

religious knowledge as they have in secular knowledge. They freshen and keep up their acquaintance with a great many matters of this world, but leave themselves ignorant and without interest in spiritual subjects. Having had the first seeds of faith infused into their souls, it is their duty to 'keep their faith'<sup>6</sup> by one or another of the ways there are at hand. There are plenty of books to be had on this subject as on others, above all, the teaching of our Lord in the Gospels. Those who are able may fulfil this duty in the best way by meditation; and the Church insists on frequent sermons and instructions being given by its pastors to make this duty easy to those who may find other ways of fulfilling it difficult.

**Believing what God has taught.**—But when men do know what God has revealed, they may sin in the second way against faith, by not believing it through intellectual pride and self-conceit, or out of deference to mere human authority. This may lead into absolute *infidelity*, or disbelief in the truths of religion, or into scepticism,<sup>7</sup> which means doubting about the whole of religion, saying that we do not know, and cannot be sure. There are different sorts of infidels,—some that have never had religious belief, or have been neglected or misled in their youth, so that they are to be pitied and helped rather than blamed. Others have had faith, but have not kept it, letting it die out through neglect, or by doing things injurious to it, until they have lost it. If such persons openly profess that they have given up their belief in the Christian faith, they are called *apostates*. Those who leave the Church to belong to some sect are also guilty of apostasy in the popular sense. Another sin against faith is *heresy*. Heresy differs from infidelity in this: that heretics

<sup>6</sup> Baptismal Service.

<sup>7</sup> Sometimes now called Agnosticism.



do not disbelieve in the whole of the Christian religion like infidels ; but they believe a part of what the Church teaches, and reject other parts. Instead of submitting to be taught the doctrines of faith, they choose for themselves what they will believe, and like to follow their own opinion in religious matters.<sup>8</sup> There are many who would like to do this and still remain members of the Church ; but if they persist and are obstinate in following their own judgment instead of the teaching of the Church, they are obliged to leave it and become *schismatics*. Schism means division. It is not exactly a sin against faith, but rather a rebellion against the authority of the Church of God, a breaking off from it and leaving it ; but heresy and schism are almost always united in fact. Besides infidels, apostates, and heretics, who are in a habitual state of sin against faith, there are persons who fall into single or occasional sins against faith, but do not fall away altogether. We have an instance of this in one of our Lord's Apostles, S. Thomas, who was guilty of a sin against faith in not believing in the Resurrection on the testimony of the Apostles. Men may be tempted against faith just as they may be tempted in other ways. It is no sin to be tempted. Something that we see or hear or are thinking of may raise such temptations in our mind without our fault. If we have knowingly brought them on ourselves, or if we do not reject them from our mind, they become sinful. It is still worse if we go on to encourage or deliberately consent to such thoughts ; to enter into consideration of questions as if they were doubtful, when we know they are matters of faith that are certainly taught by the Church. It may be right to read and inquire, and seek advice and help ; for many such difficulties come from want of clear knowledge of Christian doctrine. But when

<sup>8</sup> Heresy means choosing, selecting.

once we know that our ideas and views are contrary to what the Church has laid down to be the doctrine of Christ, we sin against faith if we do not strive to overcome ourselves and to bow before what God has revealed. It is in this way that we worship God with our intellect by faith in what He teaches. We are taught to make frequent acts of faith by reciting the profession of our belief in God, and in whatever He has revealed to us through His Church.

**Professing our Faith.**—We sin against faith in the third way by not professing, or, as it used to be called, *confessing*,<sup>9</sup> our faith. A man knows what God has revealed, and firmly believes it, and yet he is afraid or ashamed to confess it. This was the sin S. Peter was guilty of in denying our Lord. He believed in Him, but feared, in the presence of His persecutors, to acknowledge himself one of His disciples. It is a part of our worship of God by faith not to be afraid or ashamed of our belief in Him, to acknowledge Him before men by maintaining and upholding the truth of whatever we know that He has revealed.<sup>10</sup> This does not mean that we are to profess our belief when we are not called on to do so, or when we cannot see that any good will come of it. But it means (1) that we are never to deny Him, or our religion, under any circumstances, and (2) that we are never to conceal our religion *because* we are afraid or ashamed to own it. If God's honour and glory will not be upheld by our doing so, and if it will not be the means of good to others or to our own souls; in fact, if we have got

<sup>9</sup> We speak of martyrs and confessors, meaning by the former those who have died sooner than deny their faith, and by the latter those who have suffered persecution for professing it.

<sup>10</sup> 'But I say unto you, whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God' (S. Luke xii. 8).

no reason for speaking, we may, without sin, keep silence ; but we must not sacrifice our duty to God or the good of our neighbours to any selfish regard to our own welfare and feelings. To do so would be a sin, and to deny Him would be a grievous sin.

We worship God interiorly in mind by the exercise and practice of the three theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. But we are also bound to pay God exterior worship. We are to adore God, not only in our hearts and minds, but also by our outward actions. This external adoration of God is what is meant by the virtue of religion, which will be spoken of after Hope and Charity.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### VIRTUE OF HOPE.

FEAR AND HOPE ; A SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE ; HOW EXERCISED ;  
SINS AGAINST HOPE ; PRESUMPTION ; DESPAIR ; DIFFIDENCE ;  
GROUNDS OF HOPE.

**Fear and Hope.**—Besides worshipping God by faith, we must worship Him by confidence in Him. As we honour God by believing without any doubt whatever He reveals to us, so we show recognition of His goodness to us by placing confidence and trust in Him as one who cares for us and loves us. Left to ourselves we should be inclined to fear God more than to hope in Him. Men see how great and powerful and immense God must be, who made this world, and they are apt to be overcome with the thought of His infinite greatness. Moreover God has, at different times, sent terrible judgments on men, with the very purpose of teaching them to fear Him. He taught the world first to fear Him as a great and terrible God,<sup>1</sup> and to serve Him with strict obedience. He sent a deluge to destroy men on account of their wickedness, saving only one family. He sent down fire from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah for the impurity of the inhabitants. He gave His Commandments from Mount Sinai to the Israelites, speaking to them with a voice of thunder out of the cloud of darkness, so that the people were terrified. In the desert He made the ground open and swallow up those who rebelled against

<sup>1</sup> 'The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee, a God mighty and terrible' (Deut. vii. 21).

Him. Yet even then He desired that men should trust in His goodness, and hope in His care of them. When the Israelites reached the borders of the Promised Land, and were afraid to enter it on account of the giants that inhabited it, God punished their want of trust in His protection and assistance by sending them back to wander for forty years in the desert, until all that generation who had distrusted Him had died. And after they had entered the Land of Promise, He repeatedly enabled them to conquer their enemies and oppressors with a very small number of men, to make them feel that He was with them, and to teach them to trust in Him.

**A Supernatural Virtue.**—Now that which God taught the world in old times He desires that each of us should understand now, namely, that the beginning of serving God is to fear and obey Him;<sup>2</sup> and yet that this will never please God unless we also trust in Him. Fear without hope will not satisfy Him, nor will hope without fear. The Christian virtue of hope is, indeed, not a mere trust in God's goodness, but is a hope that has the fear of God in it.<sup>3</sup> And this Christian hope—or, at least, the seed of it—is given to us at our baptism. It does not begin with ourselves, but is a supernatural virtue, coming from the Holy Spirit, depending on supernatural motives, and supported by supernatural aids. It is also one of the three Theological Virtues, being directed, like Faith and Charity, to God, and having Him for its object.

**How exercised.**—But though hope is, in the first instance, a gift of God, a virtue infused into our souls at baptism, yet it is a virtue that we are bound to practise and bring into exercise. The duty of doing this is laid

<sup>2</sup> 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' (Ecclus. i. 16).

<sup>3</sup> 'Work your salvation with fear and trembling' (Philip. ii. 12).

on us by the first Commandment, which teaches us *to worship God by hope*. This duty consists, first, in not committing any sins against hope ; and next, in cultivating and strengthening hope in our souls, and acting upon it in our daily life.

**Sins against Hope : Presumption.**—The chief sins against hope are presumption and despair. Both are very dangerous sins and are reckoned amongst the sins against the Holy Ghost, because they interrupt His influence and stand in the way of His work on the soul. Presumption is a hope without any fear of God. It is a foolish confidence of God's care and protection without ourselves taking the proper means to keep from sin and harm. It is leaving the care of ourselves to God without doing what we can ourselves. We cannot have too much confidence in God, if it is a right sort of confidence ; but presumption is a spurious sort of confidence, which would leave everything to God without exertion on our part. People are guilty of this sin who trust for salvation to the mercy of God, going on meantime in a life of sin, without making any effort to get out of it, or have it forgiven, or to make satisfaction for it ; whereas God's mercy, though unbounded, is to those who repent, not to those who do not. A lesser and very common sin of presumption is when men pray to God to preserve them from temporal ills and harm, and hope that He will do so, while they run into danger themselves ;<sup>4</sup> or when they will not give themselves the trouble to take the natural means and remedies for escaping harm.

**Despair.**—The other great sin against hope is despair, which consists in giving up hope altogether. Cain is

<sup>4</sup> The devil tempted our Lord to this sort of presumption in suggesting that He should throw Himself down from the temple (S. Matt. iv. 6).

believed to have fallen into despair after murdering his brother, when he said, 'My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon.'<sup>5</sup> Judas was guilty of it when he betrayed our Lord, and went and hanged himself. It is part of the misery of lost souls that they are without hope. But in this life men need never despair of forgiveness, however great may be their sins, as no one is shut out from forgiveness if he truly repents. To despair of God's mercy and forgiveness is especially displeasing to Him, because He has given such exceedingly great proofs of His love and kindness to us.<sup>6</sup> Our Lord when on earth was even reproached with being the friend of sinners. By His discourses and parables<sup>7</sup> and His own example He taught the unbounded mercy of God to sinners that repent.

**Diffidence.**—To be without any hope in God's goodness is therefore a grievous sin; but there is a lesser sin of the same character called diffidence, or, more commonly, want of confidence in God. This means being deficient in hope, not having sufficient trust in God's care, protection, and providence. Without being a grievous sin, it is one that stands greatly in the way of perfection. Spiritual writers insist very much on the importance of diffidence in ourselves and great confidence in God as one of the secrets of spiritual progress.

**Grounds of Hope.**—The theological virtue of hope has, however, to be kept up, not merely by not committing sins against it, but by cultivating and exercising the virtue itself. To do this it is necessary to call to mind the grounds of hope. The hope of obtaining for-

<sup>5</sup> Gen. iv. 13.

<sup>6</sup> 'Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends' (S. John xv. 13).

<sup>7</sup> See the parable of the prodigal son (S. Luke xv.).



giveness of our sins in this world and eternal happiness in the next does not rest on our own worthiness, but on God's goodness and on Christ's merits. God is (1) omnipotent, able to do whatever He will; (2) He is good and merciful in Himself, and (3) full of love to us. He has shown this by all He has done for us in the world, by His gifts of nature, and still more by coming into the world for our salvation and dying on the Cross for us. (4) He has promised forgiveness to those who repent and turn to God; He has promised eternal life to those who serve Him;<sup>8</sup> He has promised to answer our prayers; He has promised His grace in the Sacraments. Can He be unfaithful to His promises? Has He been so to ourselves in past times? By dwelling on these considerations, and such as these, we stir up and increase our trust in God. And the more reason we have to fear on account of our own many sins and few good works, the more should we encourage and cultivate a spirit of trust in God's goodness and mercy, praying earnestly for it, and saying frequently and with great attention the Act of Hope.

<sup>8</sup> 'The hope of life everlasting, which God, who lieth not, hath promised' (Tit. i. 2).

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### THE VIRTUE OF CHARITY.

MEANING ; DIFFERENT KINDS OF LOVE ; A SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE ; GREATNESS OF CHARITY ; FIRST PRECEPT OF CHARITY ; FULFILLED, FIRST, BY NOT OFFENDING GOD ; SECONDLY, BY CONSIDERING MOTIVES ; GOD'S GOODNESS TO US ; HIS GOODNESS IN HIMSELF ; THIRDLY, BY PRACTISING IT IN OUTWARD ACTS ; SECOND PRECEPT OF CHARITY, FOR HIS SAKE ; WHO OUR NEIGHBOUR IS ; WORKS OF MERCY ; LOVING ENEMIES.

**Meaning.**—The word Charity comes from the Latin word *caritas*, and means love. In common conversation it has come to be used in a different sense, for alms. For the Christian religion taught men to show their love of God by helping one another ; and those who were in want used to beg for assistance for the love of God or Charity's sake, and so what was given for Charity came itself to be called Charity. A 'charitable' person used to mean a person who was influenced by the love of God and his neighbour. To be charitable in conversation means to speak in a loving way of others. Charitable institutions did not mean institutions for paupers and beggars, but institutions set up out of love for God and for our fellow-men, and in order to help them.

**Different Kinds of Love.**—In the Catechism, Charity does not mean almsgiving, but the word is used in its old sense of love. But there are different sorts of love. There is one kind of love which means, properly, merely *liking* things or people out of taste or fancy. There is another sort of love, often called *love of passion*, as when

people fall in love with one another. There is another sort of love, called *love of friendship*, such as we have to our relations, friends, and benefactors. Now Charity does not mean any sort, but one particular sort of love. It is most like the love of friendship, the natural love we have for parents, children, or friends; for it is a *settled love*, that does not depend on the temper we are in, nor on passion and excited feelings. For though love always begins in the heart and feelings, yet when it is strengthened by what are called good principles, and directed by a sense of duty, we look on it as a virtue. All parents begin by loving their children, and children their parents, husbands their wives, and wives their husbands; but when a father, or mother, or child, or husband, or wife, keeps up the love he or she began with, and goes on acting out of a settled love, and not mere feeling, we praise such a person as virtuous,—we say he is a good father, or a good child, or that she is a good mother, for having a love of this sort. So that there is a sort of love which is not a mere feeling, like common love, but a virtue.

**A Supernatural Virtue.**—Now Charity is like this last sort of love; for it is not a mere feeling, or liking, or passion; but it is that kind of settled love which we call a virtue. But there is this difference, that it is not a mere natural love. It is higher and better than the virtue of natural love. And so the Catechism calls it a *supernatural* virtue. It is supernatural (1) because we get it—or, at least, the grace of it—not by our own effort alone, but by God's infusing it into our souls in Baptism; or by God's grace helping our own efforts, if we have grown up and have already the gift of faith. Hence it is called an *infused* virtue. As we do not begin to love our parents from a sense of duty, the love of them comes naturally into our heart from our being born of them; so the love

of God—Charity—does not come from our own effort in the first instance. It comes to us from our supernatural birth, when we are born again as children of God. And (2) it is supernatural, because it has a higher object. For it is loving God, who is higher and better than anything in this earth. This is what is meant by calling it a theological virtue, or a virtue directed to God, and having God Himself as its object. And it is rightly called a virtue, because, though this love of God is given us at first, yet we have the duty of maintaining and nourishing it, acting upon it, and practising it as a principle of conduct and rule of life, as good children do towards their earthly parents, whether their feelings lead them that way or not. This is what the first Commandment commands us to do,—to love God as a duty, to keep up this love and act on it. So that this virtue of Charity is supernatural in its origin and in its object; and (3) it is also supernatural, inasmuch as it is nourished by the grace of God, without which we cannot maintain and act on it, as we are commanded to do, as part of the worship of God, and as the chief means of saving our souls.

**Its Greatness.**—S. Paul, in one of his Epistles to the Corinthians, speaks of Faith, Hope, and Charity as the highest gifts of the Holy Ghost, and of which the groundwork of the spiritual life consists. ‘Now there remaineth these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity; but the greatest of these is Charity.’<sup>1</sup> Why does he speak of Charity as the greatest? Not because it is the first. For Faith—belief in and knowledge of God—is the first foundation of supernatural religion. And when a man knows God, the next thing is that he should fear Him as well as hope in Him. Hope and trust in God leads to loving Him, and in proportion as the love of God takes possession of

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

the soul, it strengthens hope and takes the place of fear.<sup>2</sup> Charity, then, is the greatest in this sense,—that it is accomplishment and perfection of the spiritual life, which consists in the union of the soul with God.

Secondly, it is the greatest, because this is the end of our being: we were made to know and serve God in this life but as the means of loving Him for ever. Faith will cease if we come to see God, and hope will cease if we come to possess what we desired.<sup>3</sup> But Charity never ceases. It is the permanent state of soul that fits us for living in God's presence, and for which we are rewarded with the enjoyment of God for ever. This is the end or object for which God created us, Christ redeemed us, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies us. Many great theologians believe that sanctifying grace and Charity are the same things; 'the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Ghost who is given to us.'<sup>4</sup>

Thirdly, Charity is greatest because it is the object of all God's dealings with us, both the commandments He gives us and the graces He bestows on us. After Moses had instructed the Israelites in the commandments and precepts of God's law, he ended by pointing out to them that the object of all was to bring them to love God. 'What is it that the Lord thy God requireth of thee, but that thou shouldst fear the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways and love Him?'<sup>5</sup> God forbids certain things not out of whim or caprice, but because they are hurtful to us, or would stand in the way of our loving Him. He enjoins other things because they are for our good, and will lead us to love Him. 'The end of the

<sup>2</sup> 'Perfect charity casteth out fear' (1 S. John iv. 18).

<sup>3</sup> 'For what a man seeth, why doth hope for?' (Rom. viii. 24.)

<sup>4</sup> Rom. v. 5.

<sup>5</sup> Deut. x. 12.

Commandment is Charity.<sup>6</sup> And as the object of the Commandments is Charity, so the end of all the helps and graces provided for us in the Church, and given us in the Sacraments, is to give or to foster Charity, to help us to preserve it, or to get it back if we have lost it.

Fourthly, Charity is not only the object of the Commandments, but it is the fulfilment of them.<sup>7</sup> It cannot be that a man should love God, and not keep His Commandments.<sup>8</sup> And in proportion to the perfection with which he loves God will be the perfection with which he keeps His Commandments. Our Lord, when speaking of the love of God above all things and of our neighbour as ourselves, said: 'On these two Commandments dependeth the whole law and the Prophets.'

Fifthly, Charity is the first, as being the most indispensable of all things. Charity will supply for many defects,<sup>9</sup> or rather, they count for little or nothing where there is Charity. Just as among ourselves we think little or nothing of things said or done to us when we are sure there is no want of affection. It will supply for other things, but nothing will supply for the want of it.

Sixthly and lastly, Charity is greatest, as being the strongest motive to serving God in this world, giving strength against temptation and consolation under trial and sorrow, and inward joy and peace through life. It is no wonder that it should be able to sustain and cheer men here, when it is to be their crown of happiness for ever. 'Charity never faileth.'

**First Precept of Charity.**—Charity, then, being the

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim. i. 5.

<sup>7</sup> 'Love is the fulfilling of the law' (Rom. xiii. 10).

<sup>8</sup> 'Love God, and do what you please' (S. Augustine).

<sup>9</sup> 'Charity covereth a multitude of sins' (1 S. Peter iv. 8).

end of all religion, we are bound, as soon as we know God, to love Him. Not only does the first Commandment enjoin the exercise of this virtue, but our Lord gave a special Commandment respecting it. When asked which was the first Commandment of the law He answered: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind. This is the greatest and first Commandment. And the second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'<sup>10</sup> Charity, therefore, or the love of God, is laid on us as a command to be fulfilled before everything else and with the whole powers of our soul. Charity is, indeed, a virtue infused into our souls by the gift of the Holy Ghost in the first instance; but, having once become possessed of it, we are strictly commanded to nourish, support, and exercise it. This is the meaning of the command to love God. How are we to fulfil it?

Fulfilled, first, by not offending God.—As Charity is not a mere sentiment or passion, but a settled habit and virtue, it must be manifested, as human affection is, by action. The way in which we fulfil the command to love God is by doing those things that we know will please Him, and by avoiding the things that He has forbidden. Otherwise it is a mere profession of love. But we must begin by not offending God;<sup>11</sup> for no offering or service can be acceptable so long as we are offending Him. Wilfully offending a person is the opposite of loving him; for when we wilfully do what we know will

<sup>10</sup> S. Matt. xxii. 37; S. Luke x. 27.

<sup>11</sup> 'We love God above all things by loving Him more than ourselves and more than anything in this world, and by being disposed to sacrifice everything that is most dear to us, even our very lives, if necessary, rather than offend Him' (Butler's *Catechism*).



grievously displease a person we show that we care for something else, or for ourselves, more than we do for that person. The reason why mortal sin is of so grievous a nature is that it is a turning away from God to something else that, for the time at least, we love better. When, therefore, a person commits mortal sin, he casts off God for something or somebody else.<sup>12</sup> Thus all sin is said to wound or injure Charity; but mortal sin destroys it, or at least shows that we have lost it. For how can any one love a person and yet wilfully and grievously offend him at the same time? Sin, then, is of all things most opposed to Charity; and he who loves God, or desires to love Him, must first and before all things strive not to break God's Commandments.<sup>13</sup> A person is only deceiving himself who fancies that good works,<sup>14</sup> or pious practices, or frequentation of the Sacraments, or excited devotion, will please God, so long as he does not try to keep God's Commandments,—unless, indeed, he does any of these things to gain strength and courage to keep the Commandments. And the Catechism says that we show we love God by keeping His Commandments. The first step, therefore, in fulfilling the command of Charity is not to offend God by mortal sin. The next is not to lessen or diminish Charity by venial sin. Venial sin is not absolutely inconsistent with loving God, as mortal sin is; but as it comes from a carelessness and forgetfulness of God, it must tend to lessen and cool our love to Him, unless we are fighting against it. Smaller sins, such as only come from the weakness of our nature, when 'the spirit is willing but the flesh weak,' do not hinder the growth of Charity.

<sup>12</sup> See Tenth Article, p. 156.

<sup>13</sup> 'If ye love Me keep My commandments' (S. John xiv. 13).

<sup>14</sup> 'Obedience is better than sacrifice' (1 Kings xv. 22).

Secondly, by considering Motives.—The command to love God is not, however, fulfilled by merely not offending Him, though we must begin with this. We are bound also to nourish and cultivate and increase this virtue in our hearts; and this is done not only by prayer and going to the Sacraments, especially Holy Communion, but also by dwelling on what are called the motives of Charity: these are twofold.

God's Goodness to us.—The easiest, and that which influences us most, is the thought of God's goodness to us. It is natural to love those who love us, who are kind to us, and who take care of us. A man is thought to be a very bad man who does not love his benefactors. Our hearts easily warm to any person who cares for us, who looks to our interests, and tries to give us pleasure. Why is it that we do not naturally and of course love our greatest Benefactor, our most constant Friend, the tender Father who made, preserves, and loves us? It is because He is out of sight. We see the gifts, but not the Giver; and it requires thought and pains to recollect that He is really the Author of 'every best gift and every perfect gift.'<sup>15</sup> We have the strongest possible reasons for loving God for His goodness and love to us, if we would only think of Him. The world is full of things of beauty and pleasure. We are all fond enough of enjoying them, but are so taken up with them that we forget the Author and Giver of them. Then there are those things which God has seemed to do particularly for us. And God's goodness and love to us and to all men are shown in a more wonderful way still in His having come down from heaven to show us the way of eternal life, and in having died to save us from sin and hell.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> S. James i. 17.

<sup>16</sup> The devotion of the Sacred Heart is especially calculated to

**His Goodness in Himself.**—But besides the consideration of God's goodness to us, which must have an influence on our hearts in proportion as we think of it, there is the motive of God's goodness in Himself. To love God for Himself seems at first a much more difficult thing to do. God is invisible and incomprehensible; how can we understand what He is in Himself? But if we ask ourselves, Why is God good to us? Why does He care for us so much? Why has He done such great things for us? It is because He is the Fountain of Love and Goodness, and His love and goodness are always overflowing and pouring themselves out in every direction. Like the sun, whose heat and light cannot be kept in,<sup>17</sup> so God sheds forth His loving-kindness on everything. He is good in Himself. And the true and pure love of God does not consist in loving Him because of His benefits, but *for His own sake*, though we know His goodness in Himself by His goodness to us. Now we may gain some sort of idea of God's goodness by considering His works in the visible world. The world is full of things beautiful and pleasant. Those who study it most are in raptures about it. And every one of us admires some things in the world and thinks them beautiful, and every one finds something that he loves and runs after. Yet there is nothing that is lovely or good or pleasant in the world but what is the work of God. It is He who made things, and made them to be beautiful and agreeable. He put into them the qualities that we

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assist us in increasing the spirit and fervour of Charity. The amazing love of God and His tender compassion to His children are brought more clearly before our thoughts and more close to our own feeling under the representation of a human heart burning with love amidst the torture of the Passion endured for us.

<sup>17</sup> 'There is no one that can hide himself from his heat' (Ps. xviii. 7).

admire so much. Whatever of beauty and goodness they have comes from Him. If they, then, are so good, what must their Creator be, who has every sort of beauty and goodness in perfection? Since His creatures are so enchanting which possess some one or more kinds of goodness in a small degree, what must be the absorbing attraction of a Being who possesses every kind of goodness in full perfection? If men run after that which is a little good, how would they be drawn towards the Sovereign Good, to Him who is love and beauty and goodness itself? Was God seen as He is, He must be loved.<sup>18</sup> But in our present state we cannot see God.<sup>19</sup>

**Third Means: Exercising it in outward Acts.**—The first step towards loving God and showing that we love Him is not to offend Him. Yet this is not enough; we must go on to do good works, or things that are pleasing to Him. Now, as God measures actions not by the outward effect, but by the inward intention and aim with which they are done,<sup>20</sup> anything, however small, that is offered to God, or done for Him out of love for Him, or with the desire of pleasing Him, is a good work. It is this that makes the work a good one. The ordinary actions of our daily lives may be made acts of charity if done to please and glorify Him.<sup>21</sup> Or again, any offerings of our time, means, or trouble in the service of the Church, if done to show Him greater honour on earth.

**Second Precept of Charity.**—But our Lord when on earth taught His disciples one way of exercising charity

<sup>18</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 11.

<sup>19</sup> 'Thou canst not see My face: for man shall not see Me and live' (Exod. xxiii. 20).

<sup>20</sup> 'For man seeth those things that appear, but the Lord beholdeth the heart' (1 Kings xv. 7).

<sup>21</sup> 'Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all things to the glory of God' (1 Cor. x. 31).

which was above all acceptable to Him,—that of loving our neighbour for His sake. When He told His disciples that the first and great Commandment was the love of God, He went on to say that the second was like to it, ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.’ This is called the second precept of charity. It is not, however, a different sort of charity from the love of God. By the first precept we love God for His own sake, and by the second we are to love our neighbour for God’s sake. It is still loving God, but manifesting our love to Him by love to those whom He loves. And this is the only enduring motive for loving our neighbour. For if our love of him comes from a feeling of benevolence or compassion, this feeling may grow cold and die out; we cannot depend on its continuance. If it rests on the amiability or other good qualities of our neighbour, these may some day be found wanting, and then our charity would break down. We cannot love others for qualities that they do not possess. Their character may be such as to upset our love, and to excite our dislike or disgust. If, again, we loved others because we happened to like them, or because they loved us and treated us well, that would be a mere natural love,<sup>22</sup> not deserving of any reward hereafter. But we are commanded to love our neighbour from a supernatural motive, because we love God, and therefore love those that are beloved by Him, for His sake, and because He has enjoined it, and not as a matter of taste or fancy. If we really love God, it must be shown in this way. We do not really love God if we do not love others for His sake.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>22</sup> ‘For if you love those that love you, what reward shall you have? Do not even the publicans the same?’ (S. Matt. v. 47.)

<sup>23</sup> ‘If a man say, I love God, and hateth his neighbour, he is a liar’ (1 S. John iv. 20).

**Who our Neighbour is.**—Who is meant by our neighbour? This term includes all those that are nearest to us, or with whom we have anything to do. We cannot love those whom we do not know, and with whom we have nothing to do. But the term includes all that we do know, or have any dealings with, whether in the same position of life as ourselves or not. No one is to be excluded.

**Works of Mercy.**—And how are we to exercise love towards our neighbour? Love of our neighbour is practised not by mere words or expressions, but by actions—by doing good to others both in body and soul, according to their needs and our own ability. Seven of the principal ways of assisting our neighbour as regards his bodily wants are called the seven Corporal works of mercy, and seven others which have reference to his soul are called the seven Spiritual works of mercy. Doing good to others in some way is indispensable. ‘He that shall see his brother in need, and shutteth up his bowels from him, how doth the charity of God abide in him?’ Our Lord in one place gives us a description of the last Judgment, and it is to be remarked that He speaks as if men were placed at the right hand or the left, entirely according as they practised acts of charity on their neighbour for His sake. ‘I was hungry, and you gave Me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me to drink; I was naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.’ And He shows that the whole virtue of these acts was in this, that, having done these actions for His sake, they were really done to Him. ‘Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’<sup>24</sup>

**Loving Enemies.**—The precept of charity to our

<sup>24</sup> S. Matt. xxv.



neighbour extends to all whom we have to do with, even though they should be those who have ill-treated us, and whom we look on as our enemies. Our Lord expressly taught His disciples to love their enemies. The question is, how far this is a counsel of perfection, and how far it is a matter of obligation. To love our enemies with a special love, selecting them above others for benefits and kindnesses, is not laid on us as a matter of precept, but as a counsel of perfection. But we are not at liberty to refuse to our enemies what we would do for any one else. Our Lord says that in this matter we are to imitate our Father who is in heaven—‘Who maketh His sun to rise on the good and on the bad, and raineth on the just and on the unjust.’<sup>25</sup> We must not refuse, out of spite or vindictiveness, to do to our enemy any common act of civility and good-will. We may without sin correct him for a fault, or claim our due from him, or avoid his company, provided we are not doing any of these things out of ill-feeling; but we must not lose charity or good-will to him. We are not to cease to wish him well, or to exclude him from our prayers, or to refuse to forgive him. In explaining the Commandments of the second table that refer to our neighbour, we shall see that what makes the real difference between one sin and another, or between what is a sin and what is not, is whether there is a breach or loss of charity. Parents chide and punish their children, brothers and sisters fall out and quarrel; yet all the time they love each other, and would defend each other from injury and harm. This is the sort of charity that Christ teaches us to have for all men, looking on them as members of the same family of which He is the head.

<sup>25</sup> S. Matt. v. 45.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

### THE SPIRITUAL LIFE.

MEANING; MORAL VIRTUES; PRUDENCE; JUSTICE; FORTITUDE;  
TEMPERANCE; THE CAPITAL SINS; CONTRARY VIRTUES;  
EIGHT BEATITUDES; COUNSELS OF PERFECTION; EXERCISES  
OF SPIRITUAL LIFE; EMINENT GOOD WORKS; THE CHRIS-  
TIAN'S DAILY EXERCISE; SPIRITUAL DIRECTION.

**Meaning.**—Loving God and our neighbour for God's sake includes the whole of a Christian's life. Our Lord taught this not only by the two precepts of charity, but by the whole of His teaching and example. What is called the spiritual life is the study of the best means to attain to this, and of putting these means into actual practice. The Catechism therefore, after setting forth the principal things that a Christian is bound (1) to believe and (2) to do in order to be saved, and (3) the means of grace to help us, has at the end two or three chapters on matters connected with the exercise and practice of Christian perfection and the spiritual life. These may be classified under (1) the vices to be avoided, (2) the virtues to be aimed at, and (3) the exercises to be practised with a view to this avoiding of sin and attainment of virtue.

**Moral Virtues.**—The spiritual life of a Christian, being a supernatural life, is built on the supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. The Catechism therefore puts these first; but as they have been already explained, there is no occasion to say more of them. Lest, however, it might be supposed that these were to supersede the Moral Virtues, the Catechism enumerates the four principal Moral Virtues, called, therefore, the Cardinal

Virtues,—Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance. These ‘are, as it were, the source and support of all others, both moral and intellectual.’<sup>1</sup> Moral Virtues are distinguished from Theological Virtues because the latter have God for their immediate object, while the former are concerned with the regulation of our own conduct in the world, and are not necessarily directed to God. Thus it is possible for heretics, heathens, and unbelievers to possess Moral Virtues. These virtues have their reward in this world, or the next, according to the motive and aim we have in acquiring and practising them. However perfect men may be in them, they do not deserve a future and supernatural reward unless exercised from supernatural motives. The Catechism brings them in that we may understand (1) that the Christian is not to be without them or to neglect their exercise, though he is to go above and beyond them, and (2) that these moral virtues are to be exercised not from mere natural motives, such as keeping up our character, getting on in life, gaining the esteem of men, but with the higher object of pleasing God.

**Prudence.**—Prudence consists in considering with care the objects we have in view, whether in this world or in the next, and whether for our own good or that of others, and arranging the means we ought to take for those objects. It implies therefore a consideration of the circumstances in which we are placed, so that we may suit our efforts to what is within our power, and what is likely to lead to success. Our Lord repeatedly inculcated on His disciples that they should use the same wisdom and prudence in saving their souls that the men of the world do in their affairs.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *Catechism of Virtues and Vices*, by Dr. Richards.

<sup>2</sup> See the parable of the unjust steward (S. Luke xviii.), and of the ten virgins (S. Matt. xxv.).

**Justice.**—Justice is often used in Holy Scripture in the sense of uprightness and strictness in obeying the will of God, but the moral virtue of justice means a constant and fixed disposition to give to every one that which is his due, whether in dividing and distributing the goods of life, or in meting out rewards and punishments. Our Lord appealed to this virtue in replying to those who tempted Him, ‘Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’

**Fortitude.**—Fortitude is a virtue, consisting in a readiness to undergo trials and to endure suffering in the performance of our duty to man or to God. It is a disposition which enables men to persevere in their undertakings, and therefore to succeed in them, because they are not beaten down either by inward pain or outward opposition. We have a wonderful example of Fortitude in the history of the seven Machabees.<sup>3</sup> It is the Christian virtue of Fortitude which is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost that enables Martyrs to endure tortures and death for their faith.

**Temperance.**—Temperance is akin to Fortitude, inasmuch as it consists in overcoming pleasure, as Fortitude is in overcoming pain. The temperate man is he who has learned to control himself. He is influenced by feelings and passions like others, but he can command and restrain his desires, giving them their way only so far as he sees to be good. People may be temperate out of motives of health, or economy, or respectability, or in compliance with the rules of society, or from what right reason teaches. The Christian is temperate in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of his soul’s health, since ‘Carnal desires war against the soul.’<sup>4</sup> S. Paul exhorts us to the practice of this virtue from the example

<sup>3</sup> 2 Mach. vii. 12.

<sup>4</sup> 1 S. Peter ii. 11.

of those who train themselves for races and athletic sports, and who learn to be temperate in all things. 'They do it,' he says, 'for a corruptible prize, but we for an incorruptible one.'<sup>5</sup>

**The Capital Sins.**—This virtue of temperance and self-restraint is at the very root of the spiritual or Christian life. Our Lord told the multitudes that followed Him, that unless they would deny themselves they could not be His disciples. The actual practice of the spiritual life begins by overcoming our passions and resisting unmortified desires. All the sins men commit are traceable to some particular passion which is strong in us. The Catechism enumerates seven different roots or sources of sin, which are called the seven capital or deadly sins. They are not, however, sins in themselves, but only incitements to sin, temptations to sin, and they become sinful when indulged in. They are often called the seven deadly sins, or the seven capital sins, but it is more correct to call them vices than sins. They are the roots from which sins spring up. They have very different strength in different people, but everybody has at least a tendency to one or more of them. Just as there are different kinds of virtue and perfection, so there are different kinds of vice and wickedness. The first, and by far the greatest, work in leading a spiritual life is to find out the particular evil tendency or vice which is strongest in ourselves, to mortify it and root it out.

**Contrary Virtues.**—But while avoiding sin and overcoming evil inclinations is the first thing in the spiritual life, yet in practice the aiming at virtue must always go along with it,<sup>6</sup> because this is one great way of overcoming sin. In order to succeed we must set before ourselves the

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 27.

<sup>6</sup> 'Turn away from evil, and do good' (Ps. xxxiii.).

virtues that are contrary and opposite to the bad disposition we are fighting against. The Catechism, therefore, sets down the seven virtues that are in opposition to the seven capital sins.

**Eight Beatitudes.**—It was, perhaps, because it is easier and pleasanter, because more hopeful and encouraging, to be aiming at something good and high, than merely to be fighting against sin and evil, that our Lord began His Sermon on the Mount by the eight Beatitudes. These Beatitudes are special blessings and rewards promised to those who seek after different kinds of Christian virtue. Blessed, or, as we should say, ‘happy,’ are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth; and the rest. Our Lord proposed in this way to His disciples the particular kinds of virtue and perfection which He wished His disciples to aim at, instead of the virtues and qualities that the world admires. And as there are different kinds of beauty in the natural world, one plant or animal being distinguished for one sort of excellence, and another for another sort, so there are different kinds of spiritual excellence which God the Holy Ghost produces in the souls of men, and the Beatitudes enumerate the chief of these for our admiration and aim.

**Counsels of Perfection.**—Besides the Christian virtues set before all Christians in the Beatitudes, there are three kinds of higher perfection which are called Counsels of Perfection, or the *Evangelical Counsels*, or sometimes *the Counsels*, because they were set by our Lord not before all disciples as a matter of duty, but as counsels to those who desired to be perfect. These are Voluntary Poverty, Perpetual Chastity, and Entire Obedience. Our Lord Himself said of one of these that it was not given to every one. There are some to whom a special call seems

given to live a very perfect life ; and when this is a true and real vocation, God gives with it the grace necessary to enable men to do that to which He calls them.

**Exercises of Spiritual Life.**—After the knowledge of the chief sins to be avoided, and the virtues and perfections to be aimed at, comes the consideration of the exercises or daily practices of a Christian life. Our Lord gave special instructions to His disciples on the practice of prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds,<sup>7</sup> prayer being the exercise of the spiritual life towards God, fasting or mortification in regard to our treatment of ourselves, and alms-deeds or good works in our behaviour to our neighbour. Hence, because they were enjoined by our Lord Himself, and the practice of the spiritual life is made up of them, they are called *the three eminent good works*.

**The Christian's Rule of Life.**—To make the practice of a Christian life more intelligible, and to show how it is to be carried on in detail, the Catechism draws it out into a *rule of life* or general conduct. It teaches us that the Christian has to lead a spiritual life by loving God, by hating sin, fighting against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and explaining how he is to fulfil these duties. In this way it endeavours to bring home to us the great truth, that knowing all the Commandments of God and the rules of a spiritual life will avail nothing unless we practise them.

**The Christian's Daily Exercise.**—With the same object the Catechism concludes with some rules and suggestions for spending each day piously, showing how we may sanctify our ordinary actions, and take each thing that happens in a Christian spirit. The rules here given, however, need not be considered as of obligation, so that omitting them would be a sin, but only as

<sup>7</sup> S. Matt. vi.

suggestions and helps towards the practice of a spiritual life.

**Spiritual Direction.**—It will be of great use to those who desire to live a good and holy life to study carefully these different means and ways of exercising themselves in the practices which lead to it. They should listen very attentively to whatever may be the calls and suggestions of the Holy Spirit speaking in their hearts, as well as to the guidance of their superiors. And as there is always some danger of mistaking or misunderstanding these, and sometimes one seems to be in conflict with another, it is usual and very advisable to have a *Spiritual Director*; that is to say, some priest, in whom we place great confidence, to guide us under any difficulties, and direct our souls in the spiritual life. For spiritual direction means being guided not by the human wisdom, or caprice, or interest of another, but by some one who has studied the ways of the Spirit of God as well as the ways of men, and can see, not like a bodily physician, what nature requires, but what the Holy Spirit of God wants of a man, and to what He is pointing.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE VIRTUE OF RELIGION.

MEANING OF RELIGION ; NATURE OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP ; ITS IMPORTANCE ; KINDS OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP ; SINS AGAINST RELIGION ; IRRELIGION ; SUPERSTITION ; HOW FAR SINFUL. SECOND PART OF THE COMMANDMENT ; IDOLATRY ; WITCH-CRAFT ; SPIRITUALISM ; WORSHIP OF SAINTS AND ANGELS ; OBJECTS OF INFERIOR WORSHIP ; HOW FAR OBLIGATORY.

**Meaning of Religion.**—The word Religion is used in three very different senses. Most commonly, it means the sense of duty to God and of obligation to worship Him. But it is used among Catholics in two other senses. For we speak of a person ‘entering religion,’ meaning a strict life of devotion to religious duties in a convent or religious house. And a third meaning is the external worship of God, and the duty and practice of this is called the virtue of *Religion*. Thus the Catechism speaks of our being commanded by the first Commandment to worship God by Faith, Hope, Charity, and *Religion*.

**Nature of Religious Worship.**—When, however, it is said that Religion is the external worship of God, we must be careful to remember that it does not mean that it is only external. Just as vocal prayer does not mean prayer said with the lips only, but prayer which, besides being a raising of the heart and mind to God, is also expressed in words, so Religion does not mean mere outward ceremonies and forms, without an inward act and intention, but it means inward worship shown externally. For it is not only our duty to adore or worship God by the heart in right sentiments and feelings, but it is also a duty to express and manifest these sentiments by exter-

nal actions. Just as we show our respect and reverence for our superiors or distinguished persons by outward gestures of reverence, so we are bound to manifest our inward adoration by our outward worship of God. We ought to worship Him with our bodies, as well as our souls.

**Its Importance.**—This outward homage which we pay Him is a true worship of God, and though it comes after inward adoration of the heart and soul, yet it is of great importance, not only (1) as a means of expressing that inward adoration, but (2) as a means of calling our attention to it, sustaining and fostering it in our own minds, and (3) as teaching and impressing it on others. The importance of attention to this exterior worship is shown by two out of three Commandments relating to our duty to God—the second and the third—being concerned with it, and by the command of God given to Moses, to set up a Tabernacle in the desert, and to teach and enforce a very elaborate system of external worship.<sup>1</sup> In the Christian Church the importance that is attached to exterior worship is shown by the precepts of the Church, which are, almost all of them, concerning the due observance of exterior worship and religious observances. And the Church has constantly inculcated the practice of a number of minor observances of religious worship, such as kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament and at prayer, genuflecting at certain times, bowing at the Holy Name, making the sign of the Cross, showing outward respect to holy persons and things, saying daily prayers, attending public services in the Church, following processions, and the like.

**Kinds of Religious Worship.**—The external worship

<sup>1</sup> The prophet Daniel would not give up his practice of prayer, made publicly and openly, though his life was threatened on account of it (Daniel vi. 10).

of God consists, then, in any words, gestures, or actions in honour of God, or to show love and reverence to Him and whatever belongs to Him. If such words or actions are not used in private life, but done publicly with others, this is called a public service or public worship. There are a great variety of religious services, and different acts of worship. They differ according to men's tastes and ways and education, and the customs of different countries. The rulers of the Church allow men great liberty to honour and worship God in their own way, and only try to stop them when they are doing what is not right. For God makes allowance for the ignorance and weakness of His creatures, and accepts whatever is done to worship Him, if it comes from a willing humble heart.<sup>2</sup> But we may classify all the different acts of external worship under four heads. 1. We may worship God by our words,<sup>3</sup> as when we pray to God or praise Him, or make a promise or vow to Him, or make a solemn declaration in His presence, calling on Him to hear and witness what we say. 2. Or we may worship God by outward gesture, as the Wise Men did when they fell down and adored our Lord at Bethlehem. To kneel down or prostrate ourselves before God, to make the sign of the Cross, to bow or genuflect in church or before the Divine Presence, to extend the hands in prayer, are all ways of worshipping by gesture. 3. Or we may adore God by showing reverence to things that relate to God and persons dedicated to His service. When we pray to Saints, because they

<sup>2</sup> 'For if the will be forward, it is accepted according to that which it hath, and not according to that which it hath not' (2 Cor. viii. 12). The Old Testament contains many instances of God's accepting very imperfect offerings and actions that seem strange, because they were done from a will and intention of serving God.

<sup>3</sup> Called in Holy Scripture the sacrifice of the lips.

are the friends of God ; to Angels, because they stand in His presence ; or venerate priests,<sup>4</sup> because they are His ministers on earth, and Religious, as specially dedicated to Him ; or reverence churches because He dwells there ; and crucifixes, images, pictures, sacred vessels, and relics, and reverently kiss holy objects because they are related to God's service—this worship is a kind of way of adoring God.<sup>5</sup> 4. And lastly, there is the best and greatest kind of exterior worship, when we give to God, not of that which costs us nothing,<sup>6</sup> but when we make a *sacrifice*, as we call it, taking away something from our own use and service, and making it *sacred* to God's service. Thus we may worship God by dedicating some of our time to His service, as we are commanded to do on Sundays and Festivals. Or we may dedicate some of our means and substance to Him, as the Wise Men did, making offerings in any way by which we think He will be most honoured. And the Mass is an offering of this sort, though it is something much higher as well. Or we may make an offering of *ourselves* to Him, either in part or wholly ; and this last is the greatest and most complete offering, of what comes from ourselves, that we can make, since it is giving up all that we have or are to His service.<sup>7</sup>

**Sins against Religion : Irreligion.**—Such are the ways in which we have to exercise the virtue of Religion, or the adoration of God by religious worship. The sins opposed to Religion are of two kinds. Those that consist in want of Religion, and which are therefore denominated *Irreligion* ; and those which consist, not in ab-

<sup>4</sup> 'Ye shall reverence His priests' (Ecclus. vii. 31).

<sup>5</sup> The word 'adore' originally meant to kiss reverently as an act of worship.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Paral. xxi. 24.

<sup>7</sup> The more important of these ways of religious worship are treated of elsewhere. See Index.

sence of Religion, but in a perversion of it, which is called *Superstition*. People may be guilty of irreligion by want of care in the performance of religious duties, such as by wilful distraction at prayers or at Mass, by irreverence in church, or by neglect of religious duties; and if these are important duties, which the Church has strictly enjoined, the neglect may be a grievous sin. Irreligion of this sort is very common. But sometimes irreligion goes farther than mere neglect of religious duty and reverence into an actual profanation of religion. A person who omitted to go to Communion at Easter would be guilty of irreligion by neglect; but one who went to Communion in a state of sin would be guilty of irreligion by profanation of the Sacrament. To abuse, insult, or profane any person or thing dedicated to God, such as Sacraments, churches, altars, priests, religious persons, crucifixes, relics, or images of Christ and His Saints, is called *Sacrilege*. It is a grievous sin, if done wilfully and knowingly, unless it is about some very trifling matter. There are many instances in Scripture of God's judgments on this sin.<sup>8</sup> Another sin of irreligion is profaning what is holy by selling it for money. Simon Magus was guilty of this sin when he offered money to S. Peter and S. John, if they would give him the power of conferring miraculous gifts which they possessed, and from him this sin is called *Simony*.<sup>9</sup> To sell a Sacrament or sacred office is Simony, because it is selling the grace of God.

**Superstition.**—Superstition is the other kind of sin against Religion. This is very different from a profane irreligious spirit, and is very often the opposite to it. It

<sup>8</sup> *E.g.* punishment of King Baltassar (Daniel v.), of Heliodorus (2 Mach. iii.), of the men of Bethsames (1 Kings vi. 19).

<sup>9</sup> Acts viii. 20.

consists in religious worship of a wrong sort. It is a perversion of the virtue of Religion. Religion is worshipping God as He has taught us to worship Him. Superstition means worshipping according to our own ideas or the inventions of men. Faith is believing what God has revealed. Superstition is believing things over and above what He has revealed. There is a great variety in the forms of superstition. One of the most common is trusting to omens or signs of what is going to happen from observing natural or accidental circumstances, such as the flight of birds, the appearance of the clouds or of the stars. Another is putting faith in dreams or in something that is worn as a charm, or some words that have been said as a spell against illness or accident. This sort of sin is often called *vain observation*, that is, observing things that are foolish, and have nothing in them. People may fall into the sin of superstition, not only by putting faith in things that are worthy of none, but by putting too much trust in pious practices which are sanctioned by the Church. Thus the Church blesses water, ashes, palms, and candles, religious habits, scapulars, medals, Agnus Deis, pictures, and images; it encourages confraternities, processions, and pilgrimages; it sanctifies certain days and seasons; it sanctions certain prayers, devotions, and pious practices,—since all these things are useful in fostering a religious and devout spirit. But if those who used these things were to trust in them, more than to the Sacraments instituted by our Lord, or were to think that these things were to make them safe, without resisting their passions and keeping the Commandments, that would be a sin of superstition. To take any part in the prayers or services of a false religion is another sin of the same kind, as it is worshipping God in an unauthorised way; and this is also specially forbid-

den by the Church, as being dangerous as well as wrong. People are sometimes obliged to be present in a place while prayers or services of a false religion are going on ; but they are not obliged or allowed to join in them.

**How far Sinful.**—It must be noted about superstition, that the guilt of the superstitious person depends on the amount of knowledge he possesses. A person who is well instructed in his religion cannot escape sin if he gives way to any superstitious practice ; but some superstitious people are really influenced by a fear of God and a desire to please Him, and fall into wrong ways of doing so from weakness of character and being imperfectly instructed. They are often guilty of very little sin in what they do, because of their ignorance and good intentions. Though if they were more humble and less self-willed they would soon know better. But in those who do not belong to the Church of Christ, and have had no opportunity of knowing the truth, their superstition may be even pleasing to God, if it comes from a desire and effort to serve God, as far as they know how. When men sought the will of God through dreams, He led them by dreams. The Wise Men, who believed in astrology, were led by it to find and adore our Lord. God acted thus, it would seem, to reward the sincere efforts of those who at that time knew no better ; but those who have the light of faith and the instruction of the Church cannot please God unless they serve God with the religious worship which He has ordained. Yet we ought to make great allowances for those who, being outside the Church, and not having these advantages, worship Him in the only way, perhaps, that they know.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> 'In truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons ; but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh justice is acceptable to Him' (Acts x. 35).



**Second Part of the Commandment.**—The first part of the first Commandment enjoins the worship of God,—giving Him Divine or Supreme worship as God by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Religion. The second part forbids giving this Divine worship *to any one else besides God*. ‘Thou shalt not have any other gods besides Me.’ The sins forbidden by this part of the Commandment differ from those already spoken of in this, that the worship is directed to a wrong object. There are two kinds of sins that are here forbidden : (1) giving Divine worship to objects that are not worthy of any, as when men worship the sun and moon and idols ; and (2) giving Divine or Supreme worship,—the honour that is due to God alone,—to Saints, Angels, and sacred things, which ought indeed to be venerated, because they belong to God, with inferior or relative worship, for His sake, but not in place of Him.

**Idolatry.**—The first kind of sin was for a long time very prevalent in the world. In their ignorance men used to worship the sun and moon, they used to worship the dead, they used to worship particular kinds of animals. In Egypt especially there was a sacred ox or calf worshipped, and the Israelites were led away by what they had seen there to do the same thing. They used to worship fire, as they do now in Persia. They even worshipped devils, as they do still in Ceylon and China, out of fear of them. They made images (*idola*) of their gods and worshipped them, and hence this worship of false gods obtained the general name of *idolatry*. Of course idolatry is a grievous sin, but it is not one to which Christians are often tempted.

**Witchcraft.**—There is, however, another sin of the same kind against which it is necessary to be on our guard. This consists in recognising the devil and giving him and his angels a sort of homage and honour, as if

they possessed Divine power. As we worship God by acknowledging His attributes and perfections, by believing in Him and trusting to Him and invoking Him and imploring His help, so there are those who pay this sort of worship to evil spirits. They have faith and trust in them, they invoke them, and seek their aid to do things that they could not do naturally. There have been in all ages persons who have sought help from the devil ; and though it is very likely that a great many of such persons were mere cheats and jugglers, who pretended to have power that they had not, in order to increase their influence or gains, yet the way in which Holy Scripture speaks of sorcerers, witches, and magicians,<sup>11</sup> shows that they were something worse than this, and tends to the belief that they not only professed 'the black art'—that is, that they had dealings with the devil—but that they really were helped by him.

**Spiritualism.**—People often regard witchcraft as an old superstition that has passed away ; yet there are things practised among ourselves about which we must be greatly on our guard, lest we should incur the guilt of witchcraft under another name. The spiritualists of the present day profess to be able to call up the spirits of the dead and consult them, as the witch of Endor did for King Saul when God had forsaken him. These spiritualists have in many cases been shown to be mere impostors, practising their deceptions to make money. But we must recollect that 'to seek the truth from the dead' is spoken of in Scripture as a thing that the Lord abhorreth and an abomination.<sup>12</sup> And we cannot without sin be mixed up with any attempt at doing it.

Animal magnetism or mesmerism differs from spiritual-

<sup>11</sup> Instances—Lev. xx. 27 ; 1 Kings xxviii. ; Deut. xviii.

<sup>12</sup> Deut. xviii. 11.

ism in not professing to do what is preternatural, but only what is natural. But in practice it has not unfrequently been found to have been used for improper ends, and to have made use of improper means. Moreover, its peculiar results, somnambulism and clairvoyance, when produced, afford sufficient ground for believing that it is not a mere natural science, but a sort of magic or sorcery. Wherefore the Holy See, while not denying the existence of animal magnetism as a fact in nature, has more than once issued decrees against its abuse, and has besides forbidden the faithful to practise or be present at the practices of spiritualism.

**Worship of Saints and Angels.**—The second way in which this part of the first Commandment may be broken is by giving adoration or Divine worship to holy persons or things. It is well to note here that the words adoration and worship are sometimes used for Divine and supreme worship due to God alone, and sometimes they mean any kind of worship or honour, such as might be paid to kings and magistrates. Now it is a sin to give to any creatures, however great or holy, Divine worship. To offer sacrifice to them, or to pray to them as we should to God, or to attribute to them the attributes or perfections of God, to put our trust in them instead of in God, to let them take up our love and service instead of giving these to God,—this is what is here forbidden, and it is, if done wilfully, a grievous sin. But these words, ‘worship,’ ‘adoration,’ are often used in a lower sense, meaning that which we pay to persons or things which are more or less holy because they belong to God. This is therefore sometimes called inferior worship,<sup>12</sup> sometimes indirect worship. For by it we worship or pay religious reverence

<sup>12</sup> In the Greek, *dulia*.

of a lower kind to those who claim it, because they derive their sanctity from God, or are in some way connected with Him. Sometimes it has been objected that giving worship to anything but God is dishonouring Him. Of course this is so, if it is to anything set up in opposition to Him, or to draw men away from His service. But to honour and reverence anything *because* it is dear to God or belongs to Him is a part of our worship of God. In proportion as we are full of love and veneration for Him, we shall love and honour His friends and ministers, and the things that through their relationship to Him have a derived holiness. In worshipping these we are worshipping God, for it is for His sake that we do worship them. And in those persons who are well instructed as well as devout, their reverence for any object of religious worship will be in proportion to the nearness of its relation to God.

**Two Kinds of Objects of Inferior Worship.**—At the same time we must observe here an important distinction between persons and things. Persons can only be in near relationship to God by sanctity inherent in them, though derived from God, so that religious reverence, though of an inferior kind, is due to them on account of their intrinsic sanctity. But things can have no intrinsic sanctity. They can only be worthy of worship on account of their relationship to God or His Saints, and not for what they are in themselves. This sort of worship is therefore called *relative worship*. Crucifixes, images, and pictures of Angels and holy persons, relics of Saints, Agnus Deis, and other things blessed by the Church, such as sacred vessels and vestments, medals, palms, candles, and ashes, are only holy from being used by holy persons, or in the service of God; but if they ceased to have that relationship or use they would become common things, and no religious worship would be due to them.

But Angels, Apostles, Martyrs, and Saints in Heaven are worthy of religious worship, not merely as priests or 'Religious' are, because they are dedicated to God or employed in His service, and are therefore to be honoured for His sake, whether they are holy in themselves or not. They are in close relationship to God because they are holy in themselves. This it is that raises them to their higher position more than any privilege of being near Him personally. This is true even of the Blessed Virgin herself,<sup>13</sup> though so highly exalted above all Saints and Angels, and entitled to a higher kind of worship than they are.<sup>14</sup>

**Its Obligation.**—While, however, we are bound to pay this inferior worship to Angels and Saints, and Relative worship to all holy things, because it is a part of the worship of God,<sup>15</sup> yet we are not bound by any strict command to invoke them. To neglect prayer to God is a sin, but there is no similar obligation to pray to the Saints and Angels. It is a right thing to do, and we ought not to neglect so great a help to our salvation, since they are the friends of God, and their prayers have great power with Him. But if praying to and invoking the Saints is omitted without intentional irreverence to them, it is not a sin against God, though it is a loss to ourselves.

<sup>13</sup> This seems to be the meaning of what our Lord said, 'Yea, rather blessed are they that have the word of God and keep it' (S. Luke xi. 28).

<sup>14</sup> Sometimes called *hyperdulia*.

<sup>15</sup> *Laudate Dominum in sanctis.*

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

ADORING GOD BY OUR SPEECH ; OATHS ; VOWS ; BLASPHEMING ;  
CURSING ; IRREVERENCE ; PROFANITY.

**Adoring God by our Speech.**—By the first Commandment we are enjoined to adore God, and one way in which we must fulfil this duty is by honouring Him in our words. This is sometimes called the worship of the lips. We may do this in several ways. When we call on God or invoke His aid, appealing to His goodness, power, justice, or mercy, we are worshipping Him with our lips. Still more, when we tell of His greatness and glory, and of His wondrous works done in the world, we are worshipping God by *praise*. The Psalms of David are full of this sort of worship. Another way of worshipping God with our lips is to speak in His sight, *i. e.* with a recognition of His presence and His power over us. This is often called *confessing* God in Holy Scripture. It means to acknowledge Him as our Lord and Sovereign, whom we dare not offend while we think of Him. Thus Abraham, when he would speak solemnly, used to say, ‘As the Lord liveth, in whose presence I stand.’ This is commonly called an *oath*. It is calling upon God, who is Omniscient, to bear witness that we are speaking the truth, or that we mean to do what we promise. If it is a promise to do something to please God, it is called a *vow*. It is left to ourselves to worship God in these ways according to our own devotion. But one thing is not left to our devotion,—it is a matter of



obligation, that whenever we do speak of God or what immediately belongs to Him, we should do so with reverence. This is so important a matter that, though it is commanded by implication in the first Commandment, yet God has given a special command respecting it: *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.* Under the name of God is included not merely the word 'God,' but any expression by which men refer to the Supreme Being, such as Divine Providence, the Almighty, the Author of Nature, the First Cause; and to take God's name means to make use of it in conversation. Now we may do this in such a way as to honour God, or in such a way as to dishonour Him. If we speak of God with reverence, it is a way of worshipping Him; if we take His name in vain, it is dishonouring Him.

There are two ways of taking God's name in vain. The expression is explained in the book of Leviticus, where it is said, 'Ye shall not swear by My name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God.'<sup>1</sup> We may break this Commandment either by appealing to God falsely and insincerely, or by speaking of Him injuriously and irreverently. Under the first head come sins connected with oaths and vows; under the second, blasphemy, cursing, and profane words.

**Oaths.**—An oath is a solemn appeal to God that we are speaking with truthfulness and sincerity. It is quite right to do this for any grave cause, and if we do it reverently and with the fear of God before our eyes, it is an act of worship of God. Moses commanded the Israelites to fear and serve God, and 'to swear by His name.'<sup>2</sup> But to call upon God about any light or trifling matter inconsiderately and in common conversation is irreverent to God. Our Lord forbade this in the Sermon on the

<sup>1</sup> Ch. xix. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Deut. vi. 13.



Mount, telling His disciples to let their 'speech be yea, yea, no, no, for whatsoever is more than this cometh of evil.' It would be still greater sin if the oath taken were not only unnecessary, but rash. This might happen if a man swore to a thing without reflecting what he was about, and so pledged himself to what was doubtful or unjust. Thus King Herod, when he was pleased with the daughter of Herodias for entertaining his guests by dancing, took an oath that he would give her anything she asked, up to the half of his kingdom, not reflecting that she might ask for something wrong. When he found that what she asked for was injurious to another, he ought to have refused her. For it is wrong to take an oath that may be injurious to another, but it makes the matter worse if we keep such an oath. It sometimes happens amongst ourselves that people swear in a passion to do something to injure or be revenged on another. That is an *unjust* oath, and must not be kept.

But the worst sort of oaths are false oaths. For it can scarcely be anything but a mortal sin to appeal to God that you are speaking the truth when you know that you are not. This is called *Perjury* or false swearing, and it is punished by law as a crime, besides being a sin. It must be remembered, however, that it is not a false oath because it turns out that a person was wrong in what he said, or did not fulfil what he swore he would do, unless he was untruthful or insincere at the time of taking the oath. If a witness in court was to forget something or make a mistake, that is not a false oath, though he should, of course, be very careful what he says.

**Vows.**—A vow is a promise freely made to God to do something pleasing to Him. It is more than a resolution or intention of doing a thing. It is a solemn or at least a deliberate promise to do it. And it differs from

taking an oath to do something; for this may be about something bad. When Nathan the prophet spoke to King David of the man who had taken away a poor man's ewe lamb, David said, 'As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall die.' This was an oath, but not a vow; for a vow is promising to do something for God to please Him. And taking vows is one way of adoring God.<sup>3</sup> Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God shall be with me, and I return prosperously to my father's house, of all things that Thou shalt give me I will offer tithes to Thee.'<sup>4</sup> And Anna, the mother of Samuel, made a vow, saying, 'O Lord of Hosts, if Thou wilt be mindful of me, and wilt give to Thy servant a man-child, I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life.'<sup>5</sup>

A vow when knowingly taken in any unlawful way, could not be pleasing to God. As, for instance, if a person were to make a vow to dedicate to God some money that was not his own, or some time that belonged by right to his employer, such a vow would be unlawful. Children or others living under obedience must not without leave, vow to do things that their parents or superiors might disapprove, nor must we make vows that would be disagreeable or injurious to others. Our Lord reproved the Scribes and the Pharisees because they allowed men to dedicate their property to God, and so neglect the duty of helping their parents in their necessities, which they were commanded to do by the Word of God.<sup>6</sup> And besides unlawful vows there are vows that might be beyond our strength. For fear, therefore, of our taking a vow which we might not be able to keep, it is better, before taking a vow about any important matter,

<sup>3</sup> 'Offer to God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows to the most High' (Ps. xlix. 14).

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xxviii.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Kings i. 11.

<sup>6</sup> S. Mark vii. 11.

to ask advice of others, and especially of our Director. And when people enter into religious houses, the Church will not allow them to take difficult vows without great consideration. They are obliged to wait for at least a year, and in the mean time they are tried in different ways; at the end their superiors consider whether they are fit and able to take the vows. They have to go into retreat, and think very seriously what they are going to do; because if they take the vows they must keep them. It is the same with those in the world, if they take vows they cannot break them without sin. There is, however, no danger about making vows as regards little things, which we know we can do or give up, or about anything that is to be done for a short time, or for once or twice. Moreover the Church gives to bishops, and sometimes to priests, the power of changing vows, or of dispensing from them if they are concerning small matters, in cases where there is any sufficient cause. But there are some vows, and especially those which are called solemn, from which no one but the Pope can dispense, and he cannot do so lawfully without a good cause. For a vow is not a promise made to man, but to God, and the second Commandment forbids us to break it.

**Blasphemy.**—The second way of breaking this Commandment is by profaning God's name. This may be done by blaspheming, cursing, and irreverence. The worst sin against this Commandment is blasphemy. It is the very opposite of worshipping God in our words, or praising Him. It means cursing God, reviling Him, speaking insultingly or injuriously of Him, or of His attributes, or anything belonging to God. This is in itself a heinous sin. But it must be borne in mind that in a country like this many persons say or write blasphemous things without full knowledge of God or belief in Him, and therefore the

sin is not so great as it would be in those who knew God and yet blasphemed Him. We may read of things against the Blessed Virgin, the Saints, and the Sacraments, and other things belonging to God, which may sometimes be excused from the guilt of mortal sin, because those who utter them do not know better, or have, perhaps, been brought up to believe they were right. By the Jewish Law blasphemy was punished with death. The first instance of a man being guilty of this sin in the desert was, by God's own command, made an example to the people; they brought forth him that had blasphemed without the camp, and they stoned him.<sup>7</sup> At the instigation of Jezabel, Naboth was accused of blasphemy, and therefore stoned. And it was under the pretence that our Lord had been guilty of blasphemy that the chief priests condemned Him to death.

**Cursing.**—Another sin against this Commandment is cursing, which means imprecating some harm on another in God's name. It is the opposite to blessing. It is only God, in whose hands are good and evil, who has the power and right to bless or curse. In old times He gave command to His Prophets to bless and curse in His name. Moses before he died gave command that certain blessings and curses should be publicly pronounced on those who kept and disobeyed the law.<sup>8</sup> When Balak the King of Moab sent to the Prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites, Balaam answered, 'How shall I curse him whom God hath not cursed?'<sup>9</sup> explaining that it was only in obedience to God and not out of private feeling that curses should be uttered. The power of blessing and cursing which God gave to His Prophets in old times He afterwards gave to His Church. Hence she can pronounce curses

<sup>7</sup> Lev. xxiv.

<sup>8</sup> Deut. xxvii. 28.

<sup>9</sup> Lev. xxiii. 8.

or anathemas in God's name on those who are guilty of particular transgressions, or who are wilful and obstinate in their disobedience. But for a private person to curse another, not to vindicate God's law, but out of passion or spite, is quite wrong, and if it is done seriously and deliberately is a great sin.

We should, however, bear in mind that there is a good deal of violent language, which goes by the name of cursing and swearing, which is really not the one or the other. People curse inanimate things out of temper; they use words that have a bad and even blasphemous meaning, but without knowing what they mean; they make use of coarse, low, and foul expressions. All this is bad enough, it is vulgar, and it is sinful; but it is not breaking the second Commandment, which means saying anything against God. We may often excuse ignorant and ill-bred persons, inasmuch as they do not know better, and have no thought in what they say of speaking against God; and the expressions they use are more often against the fifth, or sixth, or eighth Commandment than against the second.

**Profanity.**—There is still one other sin that might be committed against this Commandment, by irreverence or profanity. Those are guilty of this sin who use the name of God in jest, or without reverence, or who laugh at anything that concerns religion, its ministers, its Sacraments, its ceremonies, and turn them into ridicule, or who make jokes out of Holy Scripture or the lives of the Saints. Such sins are not generally grievous, because they are not committed with deliberate intention of irreverence. It is different, however, when people scoff at or deride religion, not out of thoughtlessness and levity, but with more or less of contempt. In such cases the sin is rather one of blasphemy than profanity. Moreover, pro-

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fane words and irreverence in speaking of God and sacred things may become a grievous sin if it is done in the presence of those who might be greatly shocked by what they heard, or led thereby to lose their respect and reverence for religion.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

HISTORY OF THE SABBATH ; INSTITUTION ; END OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE SABBATH ; PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH ; SERVILE WORK ; HEARING MASS.

THE word Sabbath means rest, so this Commandment enjoins us to be mindful to observe the day of rest. When was this day of rest instituted, and why? It seems, from what is said in the book of Genesis,<sup>1</sup> that the seventh day was set apart from the earliest time, in commemoration of the world having been created by God. Having made the heavens and the earth in six days, He ceased from His work of creation, and is therefore said to have rested on the seventh day. And so it is said that He blessed the seventh day, *i.e.* every seventh day on earth, and sanctified it, or appointed it to be set apart to His own service.

**History of the Sabbath: Institution.**—But though the day was set apart from the beginning to be kept holy, in commemoration of God's goodness in the creation of the world, yet it does not seem to have been a strict matter of duty to observe it till the time of Moses. In Egypt certainly the Israelites could not have observed it; but, when they were delivered from bondage, God renewed this Commandment in the words, 'Remember the day of rest to keep it holy,' and gave as a reason, not only that God had created the world for them, with all things that were in it, but also Moses added another

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 3.



reason, that God had delivered them from the bondage and hard labour which they had to go through in Egypt, and had given them rest; and this was another benefit of God, in remembrance of which they were to keep the Sabbath holy. But this deliverance of God's people from the bondage of Egypt was only a figure of the far greater and more universal deliverance of His children from slavery and oppression, which was completed by our Lord's Resurrection; and so Christians, while observing the command to keep the day of rest, kept it in commemoration of our Lord's rising again, on the day of the week on which He rose, calling it the Lord's day.<sup>2</sup> It was also on this day that the Holy Spirit came down from heaven on His Apostles. Thus it seems plain that the institution of a day of rest from work, set apart every week to honour God, was from the first, and that it was to be observed by all. But the reasons given for keeping the day were different, and men were urged to the observance of the day by a remembrance of the particular blessing for which they had most reason to be grateful at that time. Thus, at the beginning of the world, they were to keep it in gratitude for God's having 'made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them'<sup>3</sup> for man's use and benefit. When the command was renewed and enforced in the desert, the people were called to its observance by the remembrance of God's goodness to them in their deliverance out of the state of bondage and oppression in Egypt. While we Christians have to keep the day of rest, not only to thank God for His gift of the creation of the world, but also for its redemption from sin and hell, both of which are commemorated by observance of the day.

<sup>2</sup> 'I was in the spirit on the Lord's day' (Apoc. i. 10). 'On the first day of the week' (Acts xx. 7).

<sup>3</sup> Exodus xx.

End of the Institution of the Sabbath.—The end or object of the institution of the Sabbath is threefold. It was made, our Lord tells us,<sup>4</sup> for man, *i.e.* for his use and benefit. And it is so first, as being a relaxation or remission of the sentence pronounced by God on man for his disobedience, that he should have to labour, and in the sweat of his face should eat bread. And so from the earliest times this is the lot of the great bulk of men, to toil and be weary, as the Israelites were in Egypt. When, therefore, God ordained every seventh day to be kept as a day of rest from labour, it was, as it continues to be, a great blessing to the labouring classes, who know well what an immense relief the day of rest is. The institution of Sundays and Holydays is one of the ways in which God has shown compassion on the sufferings and weariness of His children, and given them some relief and indulgence in this life. To turn these days from being festivals—or, as we call them, holidays—into days of strict seclusion and gloom is contrary to the original aim and purpose for which they were instituted. The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. The second object of the Sabbath was the worship of God. If men were to be relieved from work, and to spend the day in rest, it was not to be given up to mere idleness or amusement. It was to be dedicated to God, by being taken away from our own uses and given to His service. This is one way of worshipping God,—to set apart some of our time, to be offered up to Him and spent in our duties to Him. We are apt to forget duties unless there is a fixed time for attending to them. Many persons are so wearied with work, and pressed with constant occupation, that it is really difficult for them to attend sufficiently to the worship of God. The day of

<sup>4</sup> ‘The Sabbath was made for man’ (S. Mark ii. 27).

rest, then, was to be a day in which, if we are hindered at other times, we may have leisure to attend to this great duty of religious worship. It is in this way that the day is sanctified, by being taken away from our own uses and given to the worship of God. So long as we put the rest and leisure of the Sabbath to this use first and principally, it is no sin that it should also be used in our own enjoyment. To work on that day is contrary to the end of its institution, but to play is not so. God delights in the happiness of His creatures; their gloom and work are a punishment and curse. It is only when the day is given up to sport and indulgence, and the worship of God is neglected, that the Lord's day is profaned. The third end of the Sabbath rest is closely connected with the second, but is not the same as it. It is that we may have a time for attending to the care of our souls. Many persons are so closely occupied by work and the engagements of their state of life during the week, that it is difficult for them to give much time to instruction or spiritual duties. It is therefore of immense advantage to them to have for the care of their souls a fixed day every week, when they are free from other occupations. All require to hear the Word of God, and to read, or listen to, or meditate on the great truths of religion, to make themselves better acquainted with practical points of duty, to prepare themselves for and attend the Sacraments, and to look after the spiritual welfare of those who are in their keeping. And in proportion as they are prevented from attending to this care of their souls on working days, they are bound to give time to it on Sundays. So important is this, that the Catechism speaks of it as *the* reason why we are commanded to rest from servile work, 'that we may have time and opportunity for prayer, for going

to the Sacraments, hearing instruction, and reading good books.'

**Precepts of the Church.**—The command to keep the Sabbath as a day of rest and for God's service comes from God Himself. But the Church is the guardian of God's commands, and so she both explains in particular and detail how they are to be kept, and enforces their being observed so far as circumstances permit. While the law of God says in general that the Sabbath is to be kept holy, the Church has made a particular precept on the observance of Sundays and holydays, making it a matter of strict obligation to abstain from unnecessary servile work, and to hear Mass on those days.

**Servile Work.**—The obligation to rest from servile work is a strict one. A person, then, doing any servile work unnecessarily, on a Sunday or holyday, would be guilty of sin. And if he were to work, not for a short time, say half an hour, but for a considerable time, *e.g.* several hours, it would be a grievous sin. But we must observe first that it is only *servile* work that is forbidden. Servile work means laborious bodily work, such as is done by servants and labourers. Work that is done more by the mind than the body, such as writing, playing on an instrument, shooting, fishing, painting, fancy work,—such work as this is not servile, even if it is done for money. But if the work is wearisome, menial, and laborious in its character, it must not be done, even if a person does it for recreation; for, by the command of God, the Sabbath is to be kept free from servile work being done at all, whatever motive it is done from. We must, however, observe next that servile work is only forbidden if it is unnecessary. Whenever servile work is requisite to prevent heavy loss, as in saving property from fire or injury from weather, or for our ordinary way of living, as to

housework or cooking, and still more to preserve life, as in cases of great want or sickness; whenever, in short, a person would say that it is something that must be done, this is not a sin. When our Lord was on earth He several times reprov'd the Pharisees for making the Sabbath a day of such strict rest, that it was burdensome and injurious. He defend'd His disciples and others for doing things on Sunday which were for their good. He remind'd men that the Sabbath had been instituted for man's use and benefit, and that therefore it was right to do good on the Sabbath day. The Church follows our Lord's teaching in being very lenient in this matter, and allowing different sorts of servile work to be done whenever the circumstances of the people or the country make it requisite. We may therefore about this go by the practice of good people in the place we live in; and in doubtful cases seek direction from the priest. Besides servile work, public business, such as pleading cases in courts of law, buying and selling, are forbidden on Sundays, except so far as they are necessary, because they interfere with our keeping the day holy for the worship of God, and attention to the care of our souls. For the same reason, play, amusement, and recreation are contrary to the right observance of the day, if they so occupy us as to prevent proper attention to religious duties; but not otherwise. If the whole of the day be occupied in worldly pursuits, it is called a profaning of the Sunday; not because these are servile works, but because the Sunday is to be spent in God's service as well as our own benefit.

**Hearing Mass.**—This duty of worshipping God on Sundays and holydays, is, indeed, so essential a part of the third Commandment, that the Church has, by its precepts, made it a matter of strict obligation to hear Mass

on these days. As to hearing instruction, going to the Sacraments, spiritual reading, and attending Vespers and Benediction, it is left a good deal to our own discretion *when* we fulfil these duties of looking after the care of our souls ; but we must at least hear one Mass on these days. This is not left to our own discretion. We are bound to do it if we can. If we fail to keep the Sunday holy in this respect through our own fault, it is a grievous sin. Of course it is no sin if we miss hearing Mass because there is no Mass within reach, or because we are unable from any cause to attend it. We are not *bound* to put ourselves to serious loss or inconvenience in order to do so. In doubtful cases, if there is no opportunity of obtaining the judgment of a priest, we shall be safe in acting in this matter by the rule of what men would consider impossible or seriously inconvenient in a matter of their own pleasure or gain. If we could not and would not go out to work, or to buy things, or to an entertainment, or to accept an invitation to our friends under our present circumstances, then it is no sin to lose Mass for the same cause. But often excuses are made of being weak, or wanting better clothes, or too great distance, or of weather, or engagements at home, when the same reasons are not sufficient to keep people at home when they want to go out for their own purposes of work or amusement. The Catechism reminds us that in this matter it is not only a duty to hear Mass ourselves, but also to provide for those under our charge doing so likewise.



## CHAPTER XXXI.

### THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

**ITS PLACE AMONG THE COMMANDMENTS; WHOM WE ARE TO HONOUR; MEANING OF HONOUR; DIFFERENT DEGREES; DUTIES OF SUPERIORS IN GENERAL; DUTIES OF PARENTS IN PARTICULAR.**

**Its Place among the Commandments.**—The fourth Commandment stands at the head of the Commandments of the second table, or those that refer to our neighbour. For (1) it is the first and earliest that we have to put into practice. The first notion of duty that we each of us obtain is that of obedience and submission to our parents, and any others put over us by them or instead of them. It was from our experience of an earthly father, from whom we derived our being, and from his love for us and protecting care, that we ascended to the idea of a Father in heaven. It was from a child's awe of his father's strictness and dread of his anger that we first learned the fear of God. And (2) this Commandment is before all the rest of the second table in order of importance, because our parents and superiors are to us before all the rest of men. We have, therefore, a particular obligation to them more than to others, and any violation of duty to them is more grievous than to others. Our parents often stand in the place of God to us and represent Him, and our duty to them is only second to that which we owe to God. Moreover (3) this Commandment is specially important, because a very large proportion of our practical duties fall under it, and thus it requires



more attentive study than those that come after it. The explanation of this Commandment divides itself into two heads, (1) who are included here under the terms father and mother, and (2) what is included under the command to honour them?

**Whom we are to honour.**—By father and mother are meant, first, our own natural parents ; but not only them, for there are some who, through the death or absence of their parents, are brought up by others who have adopted them, or to whom they have been intrusted by their parents. Therefore this term must include all foster-parents, guardians, and those who stand in the place of our parents, and the teachers whom they have placed over us. But this term also includes superiors, or those in authority over us, such as (1) the bishop of our diocese, the priest of our parish, and our spiritual director, whom we ordinarily call by the title of father ; and (2) our earthly superiors, the sovereign who rules over the country, and the lesser authorities that rule under him, such as the magistrates and other civil authorities. (3) Besides those who are placed over us, most persons have placed themselves under some others by engaging themselves in their service or employment. If they have in this way put themselves under masters, mistresses, or employers, they are bound to treat those over them as their superiors so long as they remain in their service.

**Meaning of Honour.**—All those persons, then, who are in any way over us we are commanded to honour. But what is meant by the word ‘honour’? Not merely to treat with courtesy and consideration, such as we ought to use towards every one,<sup>1</sup> but to treat them with reverence and dutiful respect. This submission to others’ will and deference to themselves we are bound to show to all

<sup>1</sup> ‘Honour all men’ (1 S. Peter ii. 17).

our superiors of whatever kind. The word 'honour,' then, means respectfulness and obedience. (1) As regards the first, it is always due to them, though they should be unreasonable or disagreeable, or even if they are wicked. For the command is not to honour those who are good and pleasant, or whom we cannot help looking up to, but to honour our superiors, because they are our superiors. Even if we are obliged in any case to disobey or displease them, yet it is never right to be otherwise than respectful and deferential. Slight disrespect would only be a venial sin; but acting with insult or contempt to them would generally be a grievous sin, as it is in direct opposition to the letter and spirit of the Commandment.

(2) We are also bound to obey superiors in what they command, even although it should be hard, unreasonable, or unjust. If, however, the things they command are not only unjust, but unlawful,—if, that is, they command anything contrary to the law, or still more, if contrary to God's commands,—then we should be wrong in obeying them, and must not do so, even though we had to suffer punishment for it. But what ought a person to do who thinks that his superior is commanding something wrong, but is not sure? If he has no time to inquire and find out for certain, he ought to do what he is commanded; for it is most likely that our superiors know better than we do, and are quite as conscientious. Therefore it is only in cases in which we are sure that a thing is quite wrong—everybody knows it—that we are justified in refusing obedience; and the reason why we are justified is, that we are bound to obey a higher authority before the lower,—God before man,—if the commands are opposed to each other.

Of course, every act of disobedience is not a mortal sin. There are commands which are concerning small matters and commands that concern serious matters. To

disobey about trifling things is a venial sin; but if a command is laid on us as a strict command in a serious matter, then it is a grievous sin wilfully to disobey. And to have a contempt for the commands of superiors and to think we know better, or to be stubborn and obstinate in refusing to obey, is almost sure to be a mortal sin. Children who were guilty of this sin were commanded by the law of Moses to be brought before the elders or rulers, and if found guilty, to be stoned to death.<sup>2</sup>

**Different Degrees of it.**—But while we are bound to respect and obey all superiors, there is not the same degree and kind of respect and obedience due to all. As regards obedience, we must obey our superiors in the things that appertain to them, but we are not obliged to obey them in other things. Thus we are bound to obey our rulers and the civil authorities in things that belong to the law,<sup>3</sup> but we have not got to obey them about our own private affairs, nor about our amusements, nor those things that belong to our souls. In the same way our pastors have a right to our obedience in spiritual matters, but we are not called on to obey them about business matters so long as we are not disobeying the laws of God. Their business is not with our worldly but our spiritual interests. But children, so long as they are living under the care of their parents, are bound to obey them in everything.<sup>4</sup> As their parents have the care of them, both in body and soul, in matters of this world, and in those that concern the next, more absolute unconditional obedience, therefore, is due by children to their parents than to other superiors, and wilful disobedience is in their case a greater sin.

**And of Reverence.**—So also as regards deference and

<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxi. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Rom. xiii. 4.

<sup>4</sup> 'Children, obey your parents in all things' (Col. iii. 20).

respect and reverence—a greater degree of this is due to some superiors than to others. The greatest amount is due to those who are highest in authority and greatest in dignity. Those whom we regard as placed over us by God are more to be honoured than masters and employers whom we have placed over ourselves. Greater reverence is due to the ministers of God than to ministers or officials of the State.<sup>5</sup> Children owe especial reverence to their parents; not only while they are living as children at home, but all through their life. And this because they are under special obligation to them, having received life, protection, and education from them, with care and love, and thus being bound by ties of gratitude as well as duty to honour and defend them, to pass over and condone their weaknesses,<sup>6</sup> and to assist them if they should ever want assistance, either in temporal or spiritual matters. Children who having risen in life neglect or despise their parents, or suffer them to want while they themselves have abundance, sin grievously against this Commandment. The Holy Scripture is full of passages inculcating the duty of honouring father and mother;<sup>7</sup> and our Lord severely reproved the Pharisees for setting at naught this Commandment of God, by teaching that a man might dedicate his property to God instead of helping his parents in their need.<sup>8</sup>

**Duties of Superiors in general.**—Though the fourth

<sup>5</sup> 'With all thy soul fear the Lord and reverence His priests' (Ecclus. vii. 31).

<sup>6</sup> 'Son, support the old age of thy father, and grieve him not in his life; and if his understanding fail, have patience with him, and despise him not when thou art in thy strength' (Ecclus. iii. 14). 'He that striketh his father or his mother shall be put to death' (Exod. xxi. 15; Prov. xxx. 17).

<sup>7</sup> 'Cursed be he that honoureth not his father and mother' (Deut. xxvii. 16).

<sup>8</sup> S. Mark xvii. 13.

Commandment principally concerns children and those who are subject to others, yet the Christian explanation of this Commandment makes it apply to parents and superiors also. For these duties are reciprocal. While we are bound on the one hand to honour those in authority over us, those in authority have their duties likewise to those under them. And though we begin by learning obedience and submission, yet, as we grow older, we ourselves are placed in authority over others; so that it is necessary for all to know what are the duties of parents and other superiors. Now it has been explained that there are different kinds of superiors; and so their duties differ to a certain extent, according to their position. But as all of them have authority to command, so all are bound (1) to be reasonable and just in what they command, to show consideration for the weakness and difficulties of those under them, not expecting more from them than they can fairly do.<sup>9</sup> (2) They are all bound to take care that they set no bad example to those under them, or command them to do what is not right. They must be on their guard, that those who have to obey and follow them are not led into sin by so doing. (3) They are all bound to give them reasonable liberty for recreation and attending to their own wants, both of body and soul; and also to take a reasonable amount of care of them, that they may not take harm or suffer injury either in body or soul.

**Duties of Parents in particular.**—But parents, and those who stand in their place, have other greater duties besides these. For parents are responsible for bringing up their children. They are bound (1) to look after their health, that they have sufficient food, clothing, shelter,

<sup>9</sup> 'Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven' (Col. iv. 1).

and care, protecting them from being harmed, either by others, or through getting into mischief and danger; (2) they are also bound to look after their souls as well as their bodies, instructing them in religion, teaching them the practice of what is right, keeping them out of the way of bad associates and dangerous company and places, reproving and correcting their faults,<sup>10</sup> and giving them a good religious education. Bringing up children well is so difficult a duty, that God has provided for its being attended to, by giving to all parents a strong natural affection to their children, and interest in their welfare. And Christian parents have also a supernatural help provided for them in the Sacrament of Matrimony, when they undertake these heavy responsibilities, as that Sacrament gives grace to married people to bring up their children in the fear of God. Those who undertake a part of this duty of parents, like teachers, or nurses, or governesses, or those who have the whole care of children handed over to them, like guardians, are bound in conscience to fulfil these duties properly and without neglect. No person can have the care and charge of other people, whether as the head of a school or institution, or as master of a house<sup>11</sup> or governor of a country, without also being bound by the Law of God to take care both of the bodies and souls of those under his charge. As this duty is a very important one, it would be a grievous sin wilfully to neglect it, or, at least, to go on neglecting it; and amongst ourselves in this country this is a sin of very frequent recurrence.

<sup>10</sup> Ephes. vi. 4; Prov. xxiii. 13.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Tim. v. 4.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT.

DIVISION ; MURDER ; LESSER SINS ; WORDS ; THOUGHTS ; ANGER ;  
HATRED AND REVENGE ; SCANDAL ; HOW COMMITTED ; RE-  
PARATION.

**Division.**—The object of the Commandments in the second table is to enforce the duty of loving our neighbour as ourselves. The first step in this is not to do him any harm. This is the way we show that we love our neighbour.<sup>1</sup> The Commandments, then, that regard our duties to our neighbour begin by forbidding the first and greatest harm that can be done to him, viz. to kill or destroy him. And as a Christian has a supernatural as well as a natural life, there are two ways in which this Commandment may be broken—(1) by killing the natural life of the body, or *murder*, and (2) destroying the supernatural life of the soul by *scandal*.

**Murder.**—This Commandment was not first given to Moses and the Israelites, but was given from the time that God made man. When He made man, and placed him in Paradise, He gave him full dominion and power over all living things. He might kill them for his own purposes ; but He gave him no power over the life of his fellow-man. And when, after the Fall, Abel offered some of his flock in sacrifice, and God accepted his sacrifice before Cain's, Cain, out of envy, slew his brother ; and Almighty God punished Cain very severely for his crime, which is represented as crying to God for vengeance.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Love worketh no harm to his neighbour ; love, therefore, is the fulfilling of the law.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. iv. 10.



Later on God renewed to Noe the gift of all living creatures for food, but told him that He would require of every man, and of his brother, the life of man. ‘Whoso shall shed man’s blood, his blood shall be shed ; for to the image of God man was made.’<sup>3</sup> Thus man was from the first put in possession of all living things ; he could use or kill them for his benefit. But on the other hand he was strictly forbidden to kill his fellow-man, who was created like himself in the image of God. One case only was thus permitted, and indeed commanded : when murder had been committed the murderer was to be put to death. It is on the same principle that we may defend ourselves or our just rights against attack ; and if, in doing so, we unavoidably kill others, it is not a sin. This is what makes it lawful to kill others in war ; for a nation or society may defend itself and enforce just rights as well as an individual. But even in defending ourselves or our country it would be a great sin to kill any one unnecessarily, or out of private hatred. Under the head of murder is also included self-murder, or suicide.

**Lesser Sins.**—Our Lord when on earth gave to His disciples instructions on the Commandments, teaching them not merely to keep them in the letter, but in the spirit, so as to avoid not only the particular sin that was named, but everything that could contribute to it or lead up to it ; Christians therefore have to remember that this fifth Commandment may be broken by any deeds, words, or thoughts that would lead to the injury of our neighbour’s life. Thus, as to actions, fighting without any intention of killing is a sin, if it is done in earnest ; and so is anything we do which tends to injure the health or shorten the life, either of ourselves or others. It is sin to risk without necessity the lives or health of others by

<sup>3</sup> Gen. ix. 6.

dangerous adventures, or unwholesome employments, or exposure to severe weather, or to want of sufficient food, air, or clothing, or by excessive punishment, or work, or intemperate eating or drinking, or indulgence of any kind. To injure our own health or that of others knowingly and unnecessarily is a sin against the fifth Commandment. If the injury is a great one, it is a grievous sin; if it is a trifling injury, and we would not do a great one, then it is only a venial sin.

**Words.**—Secondly, we may break this Commandment by injurious words, because they provoke bad feeling and lead to blows and injuries. Thus quarrelling is a sin even when it goes no farther than injurious cutting words, calling names, and what is called ‘abuse.’ Our Lord taught His disciples that these were sins against the fifth Commandment, and might even be grievous sins. To call others names or use injurious expressions out of temper or angry feeling is not in itself a grievous sin, because it is not inconsistent with good-will to them; but to pick out such expressions as we know will wound them and excite their feelings of revenge, and to do this from a malicious spirit, is a grievous sin.<sup>4</sup>

**Thoughts; Anger.**—This Commandment may be broken by thoughts if they are wilfully consented to. And these, according to their character, are either mortal or venial sins. Anger, and even angry words, are not necessarily sins. Anger is a natural passion, not in itself wrong, but needing great control. To be angry on account of an injury done to others or ourselves, or an offence to God, is not wrong.<sup>5</sup> Our Lord Himself showed indigna-

<sup>4</sup> This seems to be the meaning of what our Lord said: ‘Who-soever shall say to his brother, Raca’ (stupid, senseless), ‘shall be guilty of the Council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool’ (an expression of great contempt), ‘shall be guilty of hell-fire’ (S. Matt. v. 22).

<sup>5</sup> ‘Be angry, and sin not’ (Eph. iv. 26).

tion against the buyers and sellers in the Temple, and was more than once angry with His disciples. Parents and superiors may justly be angry with those under them, to correct them ; and others may be angry for a just cause, and to check the repetition of the offence. But it is very difficult to be angry without sin, (1) because in judging of matters that concern ourselves we are very apt to make too much of slight or apparent causes of offence, and to be angry without a real cause, so that it is not a just anger. (2) Because anger is a violent passion, and if there is a real cause we are very apt to be carried away by a sense of injustice and the heat of passion to be more angry than the fault deserves. Then the anger is excessive. If besides this the anger is entirely unrestrained, and leads to what is called getting into a passion, the sin is greater. For violent passion makes a person lose all command over himself, and drives him to use intemperate language and to deeds of violence.

**Hatred and Revenge.**—But while anger may be only a small sin, or even no sin, giving way to hatred or envious and vindictive feelings is always a sin ; and when it is fully consented to it is in serious matters a mortal sin, for hatred and envy are the very opposite to the love of our neighbour which is commanded by God. It is, indeed, sometimes very difficult to overcome envious and spiteful feelings ; but our Lord teaches that it is the duty of Christians, telling us that we are to love our enemies, and to do good to them that revile and persecute us.<sup>6</sup>

**Scandal.**—There is another way of injuring our neighbour which is so serious that it deserves special consideration. This is the sin of giving scandal. This must not be confused with talking scandal, which is quite a different thing. Scandal originally meant a stum-

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. v. 44.

bling-block, or something put in a person's way to lead him to trip up and fall. And giving scandal means doing or saying something which may mislead a person and cause him to fall into sin. It comes under the fifth Commandment, because since mortal sin kills the soul, to make a person commit a mortal sin is spiritual murder. It is injuring or taking away his supernatural life. If it is done deliberately and intentionally, it is, like murder, a very grievous sin. But as in the case of other sins, if it is done without malicious intention, but through carelessness and thoughtlessness, it is not generally a grievous sin, though it is a sin, because we are bound not to be careless about that which concerns our neighbour's soul. As giving scandal is a common fault, and often a serious one, it is important to understand its nature very clearly, and that all the more because people often use the expression of giving scandal when they mean a different thing. The sin of giving scandal consists in saying or doing something that will cause another to fall into sin. But how can we make another person fall into sin? Sin means wilful consent to do something that a person *knows* will offend God; and all the world cannot make a person do this if he does not choose to do it, and if he does choose it is his own fault. This is quite true if he does know; but there are a great many who are young and simple and ignorant, and who, from want of thorough instruction, do not know clearly what is right, and they are weak and easily led away. They depend on what others who are about them and above them do, and 'go by' them. If they hear those to whom they look up say anything, they believe that it is so, and that their own notions are wrong. Whatever they see them do they learn to imitate, thinking that they cannot go wrong in following those whom they regard as being better and

wiser than themselves. If, then, those who know better than these 'little ones,' as they are called, say or do things to mislead them,—if they teach them what is wrong, or put them up to it, or set them the example of what is wrong, leading them out of the way of virtue into the way of sin,—this is the sin of giving scandal. And the way our Lord warned His disciples about it shows that it is a very grievous one, and will meet with special punishment.<sup>7</sup> For it is killing or grievously injuring the soul of another.

This being the nature of giving scandal, it is plain (1) that this sin can only be committed by bad words or example before those who, by reason of their youth or simplicity or inexperience, are likely to be misled thereby. And that bad example before those who are not likely to be misled is not giving scandal. Often people speak of being scandalised by something they hear or see, when they really mean that they are shocked. If they know that what is said or done is wrong, and are shocked at it, they show that they are not 'little ones,' and have not been scandalised or misled. Sometimes people are shocked at things that are really shocking; sometimes they are shocked at things that are not really wrong, but are against their feelings and prejudices. And sometimes there are people who set up for being very strict and religious, like the Pharisees of old, and who are shocked at things that are quite right, like the Pharisees of old, who professed themselves scandalised at different things our Lord said and did. This is sometimes called Pharisical scandal, *i.e.* pretending to be greatly shocked at what is not shocking at all, and being scandalised or

<sup>7</sup> 'He that shall scandalise one of these little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea' (S. Matt. xviii. 6).

taking scandal where none has been given. For giving scandal is misleading the unwary and innocent by word or bad example.

And (2) we see who those are who are most liable to commit the sin of giving scandal and who have to examine themselves most carefully on the subject. Not the young, or those who are subject to others, but those who are above others and looked up to by others on account of their being older or higher in station, or set in authority over others, such as parents, teachers, magistrates, masters and mistresses, rulers, superiors and bishops, priests and religious. For not only young people, but others too, look up to these and listen with attention to what they say, and take example by what they do, thinking themselves justified in doing anything that they see them do. Hence when those who are set over others commit a sin, it often has double guilt, because it is not only wrong in itself, but gives scandal by leading others into sin. Those who get drunk before their children, or use bad language, are guilty of giving scandal. Masters who are guilty of defrauding, and employ servants in carrying on dishonest practices, commit the sin of scandal. Those who publish immoral books or pictures are guilty of giving scandal, and those who dress themselves immodestly. Those too who allow their houses to be frequented by disorderly and immoral people, and so put their children and servants in the occasion of sin. Teachers and superiors who do not hinder evil, or who uphold and support those who are disedifying or ill-conducted, on account of their respectability or worldly position ; also companions of those who are younger than themselves when they show them what is bad, and lead the way in sinful and dishonest actions.

**Reparation.**—The fifth Commandment forbids doing



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any injury to our neighbour, either in body or soul. Those who are guilty of breaking it are bound to show that their sorrow for the sin is real and true, by undoing the harm they have done as far as they are able. This is called making reparation. Often, indeed, the injury is *irreparable*. If a man has killed his neighbour, or maimed him or caused him to lose his health or innocence, or led him into mortal sin, he cannot undo the mischief he has done. But he can often do something to make up for what he has done, or to lessen its bad effects. Whatever he can do he is bound to do. We can generally see what ought to be done in the way of reparation by thinking what we should feel if the injury were done to ourselves, and what we should say if the person who had injured us was to ask forgiveness, and say he was ready to make up for his fault in any way that we desired. What should we tell him he ought to do?



## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE ; EFFECTS OF ADULTERY ; GREATNESS OF THIS SIN ; SINS OF UNMARRIED PEOPLE ; THEIR BAD EFFECTS ; SINS OF IMPURITY ; OCCASIONS OF THIS SIN.

THIS Commandment comes naturally next in order after that which forbids taking our neighbour's life or injuring his person. For the next greatest injury that can be done to him is to destroy what is most dear to him,—the virtue and love of his family and the happiness of his home. And this is what is done by the sin of adultery. It is so great an injury that, in many heathen countries, it has been punished with death.

**Institution of Marriage.**—To understand the greatness of this sin, it is necessary to recollect that the world, or, as it is often called, society, is made up of families. It is God who made it to be so. We read in the second chapter of the book of Genesis that, after God had made man, He took thought of his comfort and happiness, and said, 'It is not good for man to be alone: let Us make him a help like unto himself.' And after God had made the woman He Himself brought her to the man, to be his wife; and Holy Scripture says, 'Wherefore a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh;'<sup>1</sup> teaching us that it was God who created the human race in two sexes, and ordained that, as young people grow up, they should break off from their parents' home and form a new home and

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ii. 24.

family for themselves, for the purpose of bringing up children, and for the help and love of each other; that the man should support and defend his wife, and that she should comfort and minister to him. What God ordained was that the family should be formed by the union of one man with one woman. Afterwards different nations went astray from this ordinance of God. The men who were stronger than the women sometimes turned them away, or were *divorced* from them. Others did not turn away their first wife, but took another one beside her, which is called *bigamy*, or double marriage. Others went still further than this, and married many wives, which is called *polygamy*. In the Old Testament history we find instances amongst the patriarchs and the kings of men having several wives. Abraham and Jacob and Elkanah and King David, though they were men who feared God, had more than one wife. They were not doing wrong, for God had not given them any express command against it, and sometimes they did so from good motives. But in the beginning it was not so. And it is not so now; for when our Lord was on earth He explained this sixth Commandment to His disciples, and taught them how He expected them to keep it. By the law of Christ divorce and bigamy and polygamy are forbidden. The husband and wife cannot separate nor marry again so long as the other is alive; and if they, either of them, do so, or live with another person, as if they were married to that person, it is the sin of adultery.

**Effects of Adultery.**—Adultery is a very great sin; for it is not only a sin against purity, but it is a sin of great injustice. When a man has married the person he loves best, what can be a greater injury than to entice her away from him? He cannot marry any one else whilst she is alive; he can only love her as a husband

while she continues faithful to him as a wife. Next to killing a man, the greatest harm that can be done to him is to injure him in his family, to injure those whom he loves best, to destroy the love and happiness of his home. Then if she leaves him, or if he leaves her, who is to look after his children and to bring them up? There are men who have lost their wives and women who are like widows, and children who are like orphans, not because the father or mother is dead, but because he or she has committed adultery, and cannot live in their home or look after the family any longer. There would be less harm if they were dead.

**Greatness of this Sin.**—By the law of Moses, which God gave to the Israelites, any one who committed this sin was to be punished with death. ‘If any man commit adultery with the wife of another, and defile his neighbour’s wife, let them be put to death, both the adulterer and the adulteress.’<sup>2</sup> But before the law was given to Moses men knew that adultery was a grievous sin. When Joseph was tempted to it, he made answer to Putiphar’s wife, ‘How can I do this wicked thing and sin against my God?’<sup>3</sup> In the Gospel history we read how S. John the Baptist spoke out boldly and re-proved Herod, the Governor of Galilee, for being guilty of this sin in living with his brother Philip’s wife. This woman was so spiteful against him that she persuaded Herod to shut up S. John in prison, and afterwards to behead him. It is remarked that when our Lord was sent by Pilate to King Herod, and Herod asked him a great many questions, our Lord would not say a single word to this wicked man. In most countries now there are severe laws against this sin, because it does so much harm, and is so great an injury to the husband or wife

<sup>2</sup> Leviticus xx. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Gen. xxxix. 9.

who is left or dishonoured, and to the family and home which is neglected or deserted.

It must be remembered that matrimony is not a common contract or agreement, but that our Lord blessed and sanctified and made it into a Sacrament when it is received by those who are baptised; and one of the graces this Sacrament gives is a help to married people to keep the vow they make to be faithful to one another. If monks or nuns were to run away from their convent and get married, every one would be shocked because of their breaking the vows they have made to God. So if a married person breaks the solemn promise which he or she has made before the altar of God it is a grievous sin; for we are told by our Lord that it is God who joins them in marriage; and He does more,—He gives them a particular grace to help them to be faithful to one another, in case they are tempted to love some one else besides the person to whom they are married.

**Sins of Unmarried People.**—The worst sort of sin, then, forbidden by this Commandment is any sin of impurity with another's wife or husband. The next sort of sin forbidden by this Commandment is any sin or improper freedom between people that are not married. Sometimes young people go about together like members of the same family, because they are going to be married. This is not wrong, if they take care never to behave improperly. But there are others not going to be married, who only want to gratify their feelings. Now it is not wrong to have such feelings. They are part of that nature which God has given us. They are like some of the other passions God has given us,—like hunger and thirst and anger, which we must not give way to just as we feel inclined, but must control and keep down until the time comes when it is right and

proper to gratify them to a certain extent. Some people are very liable to be tempted to anger. They have to fight against this evil passion. But it is not always wrong to be angry; sometimes it is just and right if we do not let our anger go too far. In the same way it is not wrong to give way to our hunger and thirst by eating and drinking; but we have to learn to control these appetites, though they are very strong, or else they would lead us to eat and drink things that did not belong to us and things that were not good for us, and to eat and drink greedily and at improper times. It is the same about our other desires and passions. It is not wrong for them to be gratified in accordance with God's law. Thus God ordained the union of man and wife in marriage. Those who are able and wish to do so may enter into this state, and then their love and familiarity is not wrong. But there are people who do not want to be married, or who cannot be married, and yet want to indulge in such familiarities. They want to have the pleasant part of married life without its troubles and responsibilities. And just as there are persons who are greedy and gluttonous, and others who are angry and passionate, so there are others who are lustful and impure, because they have never learned to control their passions, but give way to them whenever they feel so inclined. This is the second thing forbidden by this Commandment.

**Their bad Effects.**—Many people are tempted to this sin, and fall into it before they know the bad effects and miseries that follow from it. It is very seldom that people who commit this sin do not come to be found out, and then they are disgraced. People avoid them as being dangerous and disreputable members of society. It is not an uncommon thing for those who have been led away into this sin to be so miserable that they put

an end to themselves. It is still more common for them to fall into painful diseases, brought on by these excesses. There are many shocking cases in hospitals, and also of persons who live hidden in their own houses, so as to keep it a secret what is the matter. And it brings on misery of mind as well as bodily suffering; for it leads to jealousies, troubles, and anxieties about themselves and the companions of their sin, and also to the uneasiness and stinging of a bad conscience, which will not let them rest. The thought of their sin, and of the misery it has brought on themselves and upon others, makes them very unhappy; and, what is worst of all, their sins are so displeasing to God that there is a far greater punishment hanging over them in the next world. S. Paul warns us over and over again in his Epistles that it is on account of these sins that 'the wrath of God comes on the children of unbelief.'<sup>4</sup> The sin of scandal, of which our Lord speaks so terribly, is often committed through some one leading an innocent person to know and to commit this kind of sin. It not unfrequently happens that people are led on and entrapped into this sin by a hope or promise of marriage; and then the seducer, having ruined them, deserts them. If a person leads another into sin, he may, perhaps, repent himself; but he cannot make another repent, and so he may be the occasion of another person being lost for ever through his fault.

**Sins of Impurity.**—There is a third way in which this Commandment may be broken. Besides any sinful familiarities or improper conduct with others, this sixth Commandment, the Catechism says, forbids *whatever is contrary to holy purity in looks, words, or actions*. For even if we avoid injuring the souls of others we may injure our own. Holy Scripture says that no fornicator,

<sup>4</sup> Col. iii. 6.



and also that no 'unclean person, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of God.'<sup>5</sup> Besides bad thoughts and imaginations, which are forbidden by the ninth Commandment, people might go on to commit filthy actions and secret sins which defile the soul and render it hateful to God. Lust is one of the seven capital sins or vices, and its special peculiarity is that it makes the soul unclean in God's sight. Hence the name commonly given to these sins is *impurity*. A single sin might not utterly corrupt the soul, but those who commit sins of this sort do not stop at a single sin. They go on. It is one great danger of this vice that, like some sort of diseases of the body, if it is once caught it spreads quickly and is very difficult to stop. Besides, there is a good deal of shame about these sins, and those who commit them are afraid to confess them; and this leads them to keep away from Confession, or to make bad confessions, and then it is still more difficult to repent. For they are generally grievous sins, and cannot be forgiven without a good confession. Persons who are in the habit of any sort of impure sin are not only in great danger of losing their soul, but they become very depressed and unhappy in this life; they have often weak health, and fall into disease, and sometimes go out of their mind.

**Occasions of this Sin.**—The only way in which the virtue of purity can be preserved is by being careful to avoid everything that excites the desires of the flesh, when we know that they cannot be indulged without sin. By the flesh is meant the corrupt desires and inclinations of the body, which the Catechism says are the most dangerous of all the enemies of our soul. The reason they are the most dangerous of all is that we cannot escape from them. They are part of our nature. We have them

<sup>5</sup> Eph. v. 5.



in common with the lower animals. But then God has given us, what He has not given to the animals, a reasonable soul and conscience to sit over them and control them, to say when they may be indulged and when they may not. They are often so strong that it is not easy to control them. Yet they must be controlled, for if they are not controlled 'they will certainly carry us to hell.' How can they be kept in order and controlled? One way is by self-denial. If we are strong enough we can hold them in and not let them have their own way. But a great many persons are not strong enough to do this. They have not learned the practice of self-denial. And then their strong passions, like wild horses, are apt to run away with them. And so the only way is to manage our disorderly inclinations, as people do who are carried away by animals they are afraid that they cannot hold in. They try to keep them quiet and not to let them get excited. Those things that excite our passions and desires are called *occasions of sin*. Sometimes these are things that are bad and wrong in themselves. The Catechism speaks of some of these, such as immodest plays and dances, immodest pictures, songs, and books. But besides those that are bad in themselves there are others that are innocent in themselves but bad for us, because they are the occasion of leading us into sin. They are things which do not, as we say, agree with us. Perhaps they may not be hurtful to other people, but if we find they are hurtful to us we must not indulge in them. The only way in which most people can keep their passions in order is by avoiding the persons, or places, or occupations, or amusements that have led them into sins before. The best proof of having true contrition for past sins is keeping out of the way of the things through which we have already fallen into sin.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

STEALING ; GUILT OF STEALING ; EXCUSES FOR THEFT ; KEEPING THE PROPERTY OF OTHERS ; INJURING OTHERS ; CHEATING AND FRAUD ; RESTITUTION.

THIS Commandment comes naturally next in order after the sixth ; since the next greatest injury a man can do to his neighbour after injuring him in the peace of his home, and the virtue of those dearest to him, is to injure him in his property.

The seventh Commandment forbids all unjust taking away or keeping what belongs to another. The Catechism says *unjust*, because there are some extreme cases in which it would not be wrong to take away or to keep another's property. Such a case would be if a person had a dangerous instrument or substance which he had obtained to use against himself or others ; we might rightly take it away from him if we could not otherwise prevent the mischief. The law may justly interfere with a person's private property in punishment for crime, or for the protection of society, or for the public good.

**Stealing.**—There are four ways in which this Commandment may be broken : (1) by taking away what belongs to others, (2) by keeping what is not ours, (3) by injuring another's property, and (4) by cheating or fraud. The first of these is commonly called stealing. The worst kind of stealing is the taking away the property of another openly and with violence. For besides the loss of property there is the injury of frightening him, and

perhaps actually attacking him. Highway robbers, bandits, and burglars are guilty of this crime, which the law punishes very severely. If the stealing is done without violence and secretly it is commonly called theft. If the robbery or theft is the breaking into a church or sacred place, or carrying away sacred things, then it is commonly called *Sacrilege*, because it is an injury offered not to man, but to God, and violates the first Commandment as well as the seventh.

**Guilt of Stealing.**—Robbery, or taking things by force, is recognised by every one as a crime, and it has the guilt of a grievous sin. Theft is always a sin, but it is not always a great sin. The guilt of the sin depends on the value of the thing taken, and the amount of injury done to the owner. If the thing taken is trifling in value the sin is not great ; but if the value is great, or the loss considerable, then the sin is great also. To steal a little is not a great sin, unless the loss of that little thing does a great injury to the owner. A person might steal a key, or a paper, or letter, which, though of small value in itself, might be of great value to the owner. Or he might steal a thing of small value from a poor person on whom the loss might inflict a great injury. If the value of the thing taken is considerable, or if the injury done is considerable, then the sin committed is considerable also.

**Excuses for Theft.**—We often hear persons defend little thefts, as if they were no sins ; but we must not let ourselves be deceived on this matter by false arguments. Thus people excuse themselves by saying that the owner is rich and has plenty, that he will not feel the loss. If the thing taken is a trifle, then the sin is not a great one ; yet it is a sin, because a man who is rich has a right to his property, as much as a man who is poor ; and if he does not give permission to use or take his property it

is stealing ; and though he may not feel the loss of what one person may take, yet, if one person may take a little, so may other people, and then the loss becomes a serious one. This is an answer to those people who think that they may cheat a company or the Government, by smuggling or by not paying taxes. If only one person was to smuggle or avoid paying taxes, scarcely any injury would be done to any one ; but if this makes it right for one person it makes it right for others too ; and hence the public or society would receive a real injury. If some people do not pay rates or taxes or custom-dues others must pay instead of them ; so that we cannot commit these acts of injustice without doing injury to others. Frequently people say that the owner would not mind. If this is true, and a man is sure of the consent of the owner, then, indeed, it is not stealing ; for stealing is to take a thing away without the consent of the owner. But we must be quite sure that he consents. We must not conceal the thing or make a secret of it, nor mind other people telling him. We should tell him ourselves when we next see him what we have done, so as to be quite sure of his consent. It is useful to think whether we should be content that others should help themselves to what belongs to us, and say that they know we would not mind it.

There is another way in which people excuse themselves from the guilt of dishonesty. They say it was not they who did the dishonest act, but some one else. Of course, we are not guilty of sins that we have had nothing to do with. But the Catechism teaches us that *we are answerable for the sins of others as often as we either cause them or share in them through our own fault.* And it goes on to say that *we may share the guilt of another's sin in nine ways* : 1. by counsel ; 2. by command ; 3. by con-

sent; 4. by provocation; 5. by praise or flattery; 6. by concealment; 7. by being a partner in the sin; 8. by silence; 9. by defending the ill done. When a crime is committed, not only is the principal agent tried for it, but any accomplice or accessory that he has had; that is to say, any who have had any part or share in the crime, either before it was done, or when it was being done, or after it was done; and all such persons are liable to punishment. In the same way, all who had anything to do with a sinful action, whether it is one of violence or impurity or of stealing, are held guilty of sin by Almighty God as accomplices; and they cannot escape the guilt or the punishment by saying that they did not do it, if, in any of these nine ways, they helped to do it.

**Keeping the Property of Others.**—The seventh Commandment may be broken not only by taking the property of others, but also by keeping it, although we have not taken it. This sin might be committed in four different ways: (1) In the case of finding *lost* property. If we know the owner, or can in any way discover him, we are bound to give him what we have found. If after having kept it for some time, and made reasonable inquiry, we cannot find out the owner, it is no sin to use it ourselves though it is a wise and pious practice with many to give it to the use of the poor. (2) If money or other property is *lent* to us or intrusted to our keeping, it is a sin if we retain it for our own use, or refuse to return it at the proper time. It is easy to fall into this sin; for a great many persons have to look after the property of others, and are tempted when a good deal of money is passing through their hands to keep some of it for themselves. This is called *embezzling*. People sometimes borrow some of the money that is in their charge, with the intention of putting it back after a time. But this is a sin, unless they have

obtained the owner's permission ; and if, as often happens, they are not able to repay the money they may get into great trouble themselves, and do a great injury to their neighbours. It is dishonest, and generally a grievous sin, to employ what is intrusted to our charge for our own benefit. Our neighbour would not have put it into our hands unless he thought we could be trusted not to use it. (3) A third way in which people may sin in keeping what belongs to others is by not paying their bills or *just debts*. Sometimes we buy things and are not expected to pay for them at once ; but when the time has come for paying the money, and we put off doing so, or spend the money in some other way, it becomes a sin ; for we are keeping or spending what is not ours, since we have promised it to others, and have received the value of it. If, indeed, we have not the money we cannot pay ; but we are bound not only to try to earn it, but to take care not to spend money on any superfluities or amusements, or on anything that is not necessary, until we have paid our debts. It is dishonest to incur debts which we are not sure that we can pay ; and if we have incurred them, we can only escape from the sin of keeping our neighbour's property by doing our best to repay it, if not all at once, yet little by little, as we can get it. (4) But the worst form of keeping what belongs to another is when the thing kept has been *stolen* by some one else. If we know, or have good reason to suspect, that it is stolen, we make ourselves a partaker in the sin by keeping the stolen property. It is a common saying that the receiver is as bad as the thief. The law of the land punishes the two alike ; and the Catechism, in enumerating the ways of sharing the guilt of another's sin speaks of 'concealment,' and being 'a partner or partaker in the sin.'

**Injuring another's Property.**—Besides depriving our



neighbour of his property entirely by stealing it or keeping it, we may deprive him of a part of it by injuring it. Sometimes this is done wilfully and out of spite, but more commonly out of carelessness and neglect. Servants and those who are intrusted with the care of other people's property may easily fall into this sin, by not being *careful* in preserving and protecting it. Every one has more or less frequently to make use of things that are hired or lent to him. If he does not use them fairly, or neglects to take care of them, he is injuring his neighbour's property, which he is only allowed to use on the understanding that he takes reasonable care of it, such as he would take if it was his own. To damage the field or trees of our neighbour, to ill-use animals belonging to him, to squander or waste what he has to provide for our use, or to gamble and waste our own property, and so injure our family and others who have a right to benefit by it, are sins of this kind.

**Cheating and Fraud.**—The fourth way in which this Commandment may be broken is by cheating and fraud. By cheating is commonly meant pretending to act up to a contract and agreement which you have with some one, when in fact you are not doing so. People often excuse themselves in such matters by pleading that there was nothing said, no express agreement on a particular point. But it is a sin if we do not keep to *what is understood on both sides*, because it is what is usual in such agreements. This is what all who make agreements expect, and what every one thinks fair and reasonable. Thus all who buy and sell and enter into engagements for work expect fair weight and measure, good money, the usual time, proper materials, and good workmanship, without waste or neglect. Cheating is to profess and pretend to do what you know the person with whom you make the agreement ex-



pects you to do, while in fact you do less. It is expecting him to perform his part of the agreement, while you are not performing your part. Servants and labourers who waste their time, those who do bad work, employers who do not give full payment or delay giving it, and those who engage to do some work which they know they are not able to do properly, are guilty of this sin. By fraud is generally meant not breaking a true contract, but leading a person by false statements or deceitful appearances into a sham contract, or into making promises or gifts which he would not make if he knew all. It is laying a plan or 'plant' by which your neighbour may injure himself, or dispose of his property to your gain. The most common form of this is that of beggars and impostors, who lead benevolent and charitable persons to assist them by false stories and pretences. But there are a good many who pass as respectable people who carry on the business of imposing upon others on a much larger scale, inducing the ignorant and simple to invest and lay out their money, or to engage in some undertaking in a way which they know is not safe. These persons are guilty of fraud, because they know that the person to whom they apply would not listen to them if they were to tell him all the facts of the case. They conceal and keep back a good deal that materially alters the state of things. A great many persons lose all that they have through being persuaded to enter into such schemes and speculations ; and those who persuade them for their own ends are guilty of great sin.

**Restitution.**—Sin consists in a bad will—in consenting to something which will, we know, offend God. When once committed, it cannot be undone by any effort on our part. God will forgive the sin on condition of our repentance—of our mind and heart being changed.

If a man has broken the seventh Commandment in any of the ways already spoken of, and his mind and purpose are changed, he will wish to undo what he has done, and to make good the injury done to his neighbour. This disposition of being ready and willing to repair the harm he has done is therefore a condition of obtaining absolution; without it the sin will not be forgiven, as the Catechism says. For how can any one be really sorry for a thing which he goes on doing? And he who has taken his neighbour's property, and persists in keeping it, is continuing to do the very act which makes the sin.

While, however, a *willingness* to make restitution of what has been taken from our neighbour, or for injury done to him, is always a necessary condition for forgiveness of the sin, yet restitution itself may be excused (1) if the injured person consents to cancel the obligation; and (2) when the person who has done the injury, though willing, is not able to make restitution. This might happen in several ways, such as (1) his not being able to get at the person he has injured because he is at a distance or dead; or (2) if the restitution would cause—as sometimes is the case—a greater harm and injury to some one than that which has been already inflicted; or (3) real inability through poverty; but in this last case the restitution is only put off till it can be made, and the person who has to make it is bound to restore a part, if he cannot do the whole, and not to spend anything on superfluities till he has paid to his neighbour what is due to him.

It must also be borne in mind that if an injury has been done to the property of our neighbour by several persons jointly, by their helping, or conniving, or concealing, or partaking, all of them are bound to make restitution; and if some refuse, the others are bound to

make the restitution complete without them, so that he may not suffer any loss. There are, however, many questions of difficulty in regard to restitution which must be left for the confessor to decide. The two points for the penitents to be careful about, if they have broken this Commandment, are—(1) that they are really willing to do all in their power to make restitution ; and (2) that in any case where they think themselves excused from doing so, they make a very open, sincere, and complete explanation of the case to their confessor, since he can only judge from what is told him ; and if any circumstances are kept back from his knowledge, the penitent would not be released from his obligation on account of what the priest may have permitted.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.

FALSE WITNESS ; SLANDER ; LIES ; RASH JUDGMENT ; DETRAC-  
TION ; MAKING SATISFACTION.

**False Witness.**—This is another Commandment respecting sins of words. The second Commandment forbids sins of words against God ; the eighth forbids sins of words against our neighbour. And by our neighbour is meant all those persons that we come across and have to do with in the world—those we work with or play with, whom we talk to or deal with. And it forbids injuring our neighbour by saying anything *against* him or to his harm. False testimony—the greatest sin of this kind—is when what is said falsely against any one is said or written solemnly and publicly. When Jezabel, the wife of King Achab, wished to get Naboth's vineyard for her husband, she wrote letters in Achab's name, ordering a fast to be proclaimed, and that Naboth should sit up high among the people, and then that two men should be procured to come forward on this solemn occasion and bear witness that they had heard him blaspheme. Again, when our Lord was taken before Caiphias, two witnesses came in and swore falsely against Him in the court of the High Priest. So now, if a person were to come into a court of justice, or to a public meeting, and were to say something that was false against any one to his injury, it would be the same sort of sin ; and if he took his oath to the truth of what he said, it would be a great sin against the second Commandment as well.

Or a person might commit the same sin of false witness who published in a newspaper or book anything seriously affecting his neighbour's character which he knew to be false. This sin is punishable by law as a crime.

**Slander.**—When any one speaks falsely against his neighbour in public it is called false witness; but if it is not done publicly it is generally called slander or calumny. False witness, in fact, means deliberate solemn slander. It is a greater sin than private slander, because the harm done is so much more widely spread; but private slander, in conversation or by letter, is more mischievous in one way, because the person slandered has no opportunity of knowing who has been speaking against him, or what has been said. He is struck in the dark, and cannot defend himself. It is a terrible hardship for a person to lose his character, and through this, perhaps his position and means of subsistence, and to be looked down on and avoided, not because he has done anything, but because some one has been telling some lie of him which has spread about, and thus ruined him. It is a grievous sin because of the malicious disposition it proceeds from, as well as by reason of the great injury it inflicts. The word devil in its original meaning is 'the slanderer.'

**Lies.**—Besides speaking falsely against our neighbour, the eighth Commandment forbids all speaking falsely, or, as we commonly call it, lying. Holy Scripture speaks very frequently and very strongly against this sin: 'The Lord spake to Moses, saying, You shall not lie, neither shall any man deceive his neighbour.'<sup>1</sup> 'Six things are there which the Lord hateth.... a deceitful witness that uttereth lies.'<sup>2</sup> 'Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.'<sup>3</sup> Our Lord calls the devil the father

<sup>1</sup> Lev. xix. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. vi. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Prov. xii. 22.

or inventor of lying;<sup>4</sup> and in the account that S. John gives of those who are shut out of heaven he says, 'Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.'<sup>5</sup>

Lies are always sins, and the Catechism of the Council of Trent shows that they are a bad sort of sin too, both because the habit of lying is incurable, and because lies are very injurious to society. But there are three points that must not be forgotten in reference to them.

1. That uninstructed people not unfrequently fall into the mistake of taking for lies what are not so at all. A lie means something said or done with the intention of deceiving another. Whatever a person says which he thinks is true may be a mistake, or a piece of carelessness, but it cannot be a lie. Again, many expressions are in common use which are not literally true, as when people will not receive calls, and say they are not at home. This is not now a lie, because there is no intention to deceive. In this and other cases it is no lie to use any expression which you know your neighbour will not misunderstand.

2. It is not a lie to conceal the truth by refusing to answer questions people have no right to ask. Sometimes it is only our duty not to reveal secrets or give information that a person will put to a bad use. It may indeed be very difficult to do this without telling a lie. And we should be ready to excuse or forgive people who in circumstances of great difficulty have said things that were not true, not with the wish to deceive, but with the wish to withhold and conceal information which they could not give. Yet anything that is really a lie

<sup>4</sup> S. John viii. 44.

<sup>5</sup> Apoc. xxii. 15.

must not be defended. It may be very inconvenient to speak the truth, just as it is often inconvenient and difficult to keep other Commandments. The Roman Catechism says, in answer to this excuse, that it is the duty of a Christian to undergo any loss or inconvenience rather than to lie.<sup>6</sup>

3. Though a lie is always a sin, yet there is a great difference in the guilt of different kinds of lies. For some lies are told with the intention of doing harm by them; others with the intention of doing good. If a man tells a lie in order to cheat some one, or to injure his reputation by defaming him, this is what is called a malicious lie; and unless it is about some trifling matter such a lie is a grievous sin. But more commonly people tell lies, not to do harm, but to do good, as they think—to screen themselves or others from blame, to preserve peace, to get over difficulties, to prevent mischief. People call such lies ‘white lies’ and ‘lies of no harm,’ and defend the use of them because of the good intention and object they have in making use of them. But they are sins against the eighth Commandment; and indeed, though they may sometimes effect the good purpose that is intended, yet that is only because people do not usually tell lies about these things; if once their use became general they would lose all their effect. As it is, those who tell lies about such things are soon found out, and lose their character for truthfulness; and then they are not trusted even when they do speak the truth. However, it is true that such lies, though sinful and very mischievous, are not grievous sins. There is another sort of lie, sometimes called a jocosé lie, when people without any particular intention, good or bad, exaggerate in conversation, or make up stories to take

<sup>6</sup> On the eighth Commandment.



others in ; and these lies are sometimes called ‘stories,’ that is, something made up out of our own head. These lies are not great sins, and if the person to whom we speak perfectly understands that we are only in joke, then of course they are not lies at all.

**Rash Judgment.**—But the Catechism, in explaining the eighth Commandment, teaches that we are bound, not only to abstain from saying what we know to be false, but also from speaking, or even thinking, that which is doubtful as if it was true, when it is injurious to our neighbour’s character. When we see or know for certain some evil about another person we cannot help having a bad opinion of him. But there are a great many cases in which we do not know it for certain. We may have heard it is so, or have seen things that looked like it, or, putting things together, we think it must be so. Yet, after all, we do not *know*, but only think it ; and still less do we know the person’s motives, intentions, or state of mind. He may have made a mistake ; he may have done something under the impulse of the moment which is contrary to his general character, as Moses did, and King David and S. Peter ; or he may have been maligned, and may not be guilty at all. To express our opinion about such cases is to *judge* our neighbour, and to speak about these doubtful matters as if they were certain is rash judgment. We should not like to be so treated ourselves when appearances are against us. We should ask people to wait, and not think evil of us till they know that we have done wrong, and have heard our explanation and what we have got to say for ourselves. And this is what we are bound to do towards our neighbour. Charity thinketh no evil<sup>7</sup> of others unnecessarily. Our Lord said to His disciples, ‘Judge not, that you may not be judged.’<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 5.

<sup>8</sup> S. Matt. vii. 1.

It is a sin, then, against the eighth Commandment if we make up our mind that our neighbour has done wrong when we do not know, but only suspect it; and it is still worse if we speak in this sense to others. If it is a matter that concerns ourselves, or one that we are bound to look after, as parents or masters are about those who are under their charge, then it is indeed right to look out, to watch others, and be on our guard; but still we must not treat them as guilty on suspicion, nor without clear proof. It is a sin to judge our neighbour rashly when we are not certain of the facts. And it is still worse to judge of his motives, of which we can very seldom be sure. It is God alone who is 'a discoverer of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'<sup>9</sup> 'Who art thou,' S. Paul says, 'who judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth.'<sup>10</sup> And in another place he says, 'Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will manifest the counsels of the heart.'<sup>11</sup> It is a very common thing for people to speak or write against others, imputing all sorts of bad motives to their actions. It can scarcely ever be right to do this. We may know what they have done; but how can we know what was in their hearts when they did it? It is a bad sort of rash judgment to impute motives to them which we may suspect, but cannot be sure of.

**Detraction.**—We have seen that the eighth Commandment forbids us ever to speak falsely against our neighbour, or even to run the risk of doing so by speaking rashly. But the Catechism teaches that this Commandment forbids speaking against our neighbour unnecessarily, even though what we say is true. Observe that we say unnecessarily; for there are occasions when

<sup>9</sup> Heb. iv. 12.

<sup>10</sup> Rom. xiv. 4.

<sup>11</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 5.

it is right, and even a duty, to tell what we know of a person, even though it should ruin his character. Thus if our superiors—our parents, teachers, masters, or magistrates—call on us to say what we know about some one, we should believe that they have sufficient reason for asking, and we should not hesitate to answer them. Further, it is right to speak of another's faults for any good purpose, such as to prevent any great harm to the person himself, or for his correction, or to prevent mischief being done to ourselves or to some one else or to society, if we cannot secure these objects without exposing the faults. So our Lord teaches that, if our brother offend, we are first to go and speak to him privately; and if he will not listen, we are next to take one or two witnesses; and if that too is without effect, then we are to tell it to the Church, that is, publicly to the rulers of the Church.<sup>12</sup> Or it may be necessary to speak against our neighbour in self-defence; or in giving characters of servants and others it may be necessary to put others on their guard against persons who are dangerous, dishonest, and deceitful; for it is our duty to regard the interests of others as well as those of the person whose character we are giving—we have to be just as well as kind. But, as a rule, whenever it is not a duty to speak against a person's character it is a sin to do so. And so this Commandment forbids what is commonly called 'talking scandal,' that is, repeating stories to the discredit of others, making known their secret faults, tale-bearing, and mischief-making. A great deal of sin is committed in this way, not out of deliberate intention to injure our neighbour, but out of love of talking and gossip, and because we do not take care of our neighbour's good name and reputation as we do of our own. It is a still

<sup>12</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 17.

worse sin if we make known his secret faults or repeat things against his character out of ill-feeling and spite. This sin is called *detraction*, or lessening his character, and sometimes *backbiting*, that is, speaking against him behind his back. The world is full of people who dislike each other, and quarrel and will not speak, and are even spiteful; and this arises, not so much from any injury that has been done to them as because something has been said which has come to their ears, and given them an impression—very often a false one—of ill-will. It is our duty to show Christian charity to our neighbour by abstaining from mischievous talking.<sup>13</sup> The only way is to learn the practice of keeping silence. It is a difficult but an invaluable acquirement. ‘If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.’<sup>14</sup> But to keep the eighth Commandment as regards calumny and detraction we must not only learn to restrain our tongue from speaking evil, but stop our ears from listening to it. It is our duty to turn away from hearing our neighbour’s character defamed, and to show our disapprobation by silence if we are afraid to do so in some more marked way.

**Satisfaction.**—Taking away a person’s character is a kind of stealing, and, as in stealing, the sin cannot be forgiven till the property is restored; so if we take away our neighbour’s character, or injure it, we must make good the damage, or the sin will not be forgiven. This is not, indeed, always possible. Sometimes there is no opportunity for speaking again; sometimes the mischief is irreparable. Sometimes it would make matters worse to say more about it. Sometimes what has been said is true, and though it ought not to have been disclosed it cannot be contradicted. But what he who has injured

<sup>13</sup> ‘Hast thou heard a word against thy neighbour? let it die with thee’ (Ecclus. xix. 10).

<sup>14</sup> S. James iii. 2.

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his neighbour is bound to do is to think over the matter, and try to find out if there is any way in which he can repair the damage he has done. Let him ask his Director what he had better do. Let him go to the person he has injured, and ask him what reparation he would wish. But if he cannot do that, let him think what he would be likely to say, what he would himself require, if he had been so injured. If he is ready to do what he can, that is all that is needed. If he will not do it because it is disagreeable to own oneself wrong, this shows that he is not truly sorry for his sin.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

SINS OF THOUGHT ; TO COVET ; STAGES OF TEMPTATION ; KIND OF COVETING ; NINTH COMMANDMENT ; TENTH COMMANDMENT.

**Sins of Thought.**—Every sin begins with an evil thought or desire.<sup>1</sup> The Commandments, for the most part, forbid sins that have developed into some evil word or action ; but the two last Commandments are concerned with the thoughts and desires of the heart. They both forbid coveting or unlawful desires ; God thus teaching in the Old Law what our Lord so much insisted on in the New,—that to serve Him rightly, not only our outward actions must be in conformity with His will, but that He will likewise bring into judgment ‘the thoughts and intents of the heart.’<sup>2</sup>

By the Jews, and even by some of the Fathers, these two Commandments were put together and treated as one, because they both forbid coveting ; but the Church has adopted that other ancient division of the Commandments which treats these as separate precepts. For though they both forbid coveting, yet the sins forbidden by the ninth are so very different in character from those forbidden by the tenth, that they are commonly called by different names. It will be best first to explain what is meant by coveting, which is common to both the

<sup>1</sup> ‘Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts’ (S. Matt. xv. 19).

<sup>2</sup> Heb. iv. 12.

Commandments, and afterwards to speak separately of each kind of this sin.

**Coveting.**—To covet means to desire, but to desire that which is in some way wrong. To desire what we cannot get is not always wrong, though it is always foolish. To desire things that we may have, if we choose to pay or work for them, is not wrong. We have many natural desires for the good, beautiful, and enjoyable things with which the goodness of our Heavenly Father has stored the world. He who made these things gave us also the desires and appetites for them; and to gratify these desires, and enjoy the good things in fitting time and degree, is no sin. Every one is eager to have and enjoy the good things which God has made, but there are all sorts of hindrances to our doing so. Society, and the world, and custom, and the laws of men, come in to stop us; and in some cases the laws of God and the Church do so. Sometimes we should injure our health by indulging in these things, or we might injure others or prevent them from having their share of enjoyment. Sometimes we cannot enjoy things unless we have earned them for ourselves. Sometimes there is not enough for all, and some one must go without. Sometimes there are rules and laws forbidding these enjoyments at particular times, or in particular places, or in some particular way. For things may be wrong or bad in themselves, or they may be wrong only because they are forbidden to us. If our rulers and superiors forbid the use of things, or restrict the use of them to particular times or places or ways, it becomes wrong to use them otherwise than as allowed. Now what these Commandments teach us is that whenever it is wrong to have a thing, it is wrong to wish to have it; whenever we know that we cannot indulge some desire without sin, the desire itself becomes



wrong. This is what coveting means in the ninth and tenth Commandments—giving way to a desire for some pleasure or gain which is in some way unlawful.

**Stages of Temptation.**—Now it is true that we cannot help having desires and temptations, and it is not any sin to have them unless we bring them on through our own fault. There are three steps or stages in temptation. First comes the thought of the sin; it is suggested to our mind as something that it would be pleasant to gratify. There is no sin in being thus tempted, however bad the temptation may be. S. Paul was tempted with temptations of the flesh, though he had been favoured by God with visions and revelations. Even our Lord suffered Himself to be tempted by the devil to presumption and idolatry.<sup>3</sup> To be tempted in this way means to be tried, and until we give way to the temptation there is no sin. The second step is when we begin to give way, permitting the thought to remain in our mind instead of rejecting it, and considering about it, as it were, instead of at once disallowing it. This is called taking pleasure in a thought or desire; and when we have done this sin has begun, though so far it is not mortal sin. The third step or stage is when we go on to consent to the thought or desire in our mind; and this, when the temptation is to some grievous sin, is itself a mortal sin. Although we have not as yet done the thing, yet as soon as we have agreed to do it in our mind the sin is committed. Whatever we do afterwards is only carrying out what we have already agreed and consented to in our mind. S. James seems to refer to these three stages when he says, ‘Every man is tempted, being drawn away by his own concupiscence and allured. Then,

<sup>3</sup> ‘He was in all things tempted like as we are, yet without sin’ (Heb. iv. 13).

when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; but sin, when it is completed, begetteth death.<sup>4</sup> When we are forbidden to covet, we are forbidden to take pleasure in the thought or desire of what is wrong, and still more to give consent to it.

**Kinds of Coveting.**—So far these two Commandments are alike; for they both forbid coveting or unlawful desires. Now there are two great and principal objects of men's desire,—pleasure and gain. If we think what the great bulk of men are engaged in, and why it is that they work so busily and with so much eagerness, we shall find that it is in the pursuit of one of these two things. The desire of pleasure,—gratifying our inclinations,—and the desire of gain or riches are such strong passions, that when once awakened it is very difficult to quiet or overcome them. As we say, they carry people away with them. When once men have got into the way of them they cannot stop themselves. But coveting pleasure and coveting gain are such very different sorts of sins that we are not accustomed to call them by the same names, and there is a Commandment about each of them. The ninth Commandment forbids giving way to wrong desires of pleasure and sensual enjoyment, and the tenth forbids unlawful desires of riches or gain. Sins against the ninth Commandment are generally called bad thoughts, impure desires, lust, or sensuality. Sins against the tenth Commandment are called avarice, covetousness, or love of riches.

**The Ninth Commandment.**—To understand this Commandment it is sufficient to remember that whatever we are forbidden by the sixth Commandment to do we are forbidden by the ninth to desire. It teaches us to fight against the first beginnings of these sins, as that is much

<sup>4</sup> S. James i. 14.

the easier, and often the only, way of overcoming them. The first thought or suggestion of these sensual pleasures is not wrong unless so far as we have been the cause of bringing on the temptation. For if we wilfully read, or talk of, or look at, or think of things that we know will cause bad thoughts, then those thoughts are our own fault, and are sinful. But it is quite possible for people to be tempted, even with very bad temptations, without being able to help it. There is no sin in such temptations, and if we at once resist and reject them, we have even gained merit by them. If, however, instead of rejecting them we go on thinking of them, playing with them in our mind, taking pleasure in them, and debating whether we shall give way, there is a sin, though it is not a mortal sin, because we have not as yet consented to it. But when a person yields to the temptation and consents to the bad thought, then he has committed a grievous sin. For though he has not done the wicked thing, he is ready to do it. A man who is willing to steal, but has not the opportunity, or is afraid that he will be caught, is a dishonest man,—he is as bad as if he had committed the theft; and so a person who has consented in his mind to a bad desire, and is deterred from committing the sin, not by the fear or love of God, but because he has no opportunity of committing it, or is afraid of being discovered, is guilty of the sin in God's sight. So our Lord, when instructing His disciples on the Commandments, said to them, 'I say to you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery with her in his mind.'<sup>5</sup> Nor must we forget the particular power that these sins have of defiling the heart, so that sins against the ninth Commandment are not called by the name of coveting, but by the worse name of impurity.

<sup>5</sup> S. Matt. v. 28.

Our Lord speaks of evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, and other sins as coming forth from the heart; *and these*, He says, are the things that *defile the man*.<sup>6</sup>

The Catechism reminds us that to escape from bad thoughts we must avoid other sorts of sensuality, which give occasion and encouragement to them,—as indolence and idleness, gluttony and intemperance.

**The Tenth Commandment.**—The tenth Commandment forbids giving way to unlawful desires of gain, that is to say, desires that cannot be lawfully gratified. It is no sin to desire anything that we may have; but it is a sin, instead of labouring to obtain things for ourselves, to covet what belongs to others, or to covet things which we are forbidden to have and cannot obtain by fair and just means, or to be greedy after gain, wanting to grow rich too fast, and to love money, and want to hoard it up, instead of spending on those whom we ought to take care of, and helping those who are in want, and contributing to the support of religion, or to be hard and niggardly in our dealings with others, or to desire to have more than our due share of things, without considering the rights and wants of others. For covetousness makes men think only of their own wants, and hardens them to the wants of others. Still worse than this, it hardens the heart towards God; and so S. Paul says that the desire of money is the root of all evil.<sup>7</sup> Our Lord spoke often, and in strong terms, to His disciples about this sin. He told them to beware of covetousness. He said to them, ‘Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!’<sup>8</sup> He told them the parable of the rich fool, and finished by saying, ‘So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, but is not rich towards

<sup>6</sup> S. Matt. xv. 20.

<sup>7</sup> I Tim. vi. 10.

<sup>8</sup> S. Mark x. 24.

God.<sup>79</sup> And the Gospel history gives us the fearful example of Judas, who, though one of our Lord's Apostles, was carried away by the love of money, until he betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver.

<sup>79</sup> S. Luke xii. 21.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

OBEDIENCE TO THE RULERS OF THE CHURCH ; ENDS OF THE CHURCH'S PRECEPTS ; DISPENSATIONS ; THE SIX PRECEPTS ; THE SECOND ; FASTING AND ABSTINENCE ; WHO ARE BOUND ; THE FIFTH ; WAY OF FULFILLING IT.

**Obedience due to the Rulers of the Church.**—It has been explained that Christ founded the Church as a means of guiding men into the way of salvation. Hence the rulers of the Church have authority to teach men what they have to believe in matters of faith, and what they must do in matters of conduct. They teach and explain and enforce the Commandments of God. It belongs to them to decide in any doubtful matter what is the true interpretation of any Commandment, and how it has to be kept. But besides interpreting and enforcing God's laws, the Church has power to make laws of her own. For she has authority not only to teach, but to govern. All those who belong to the Church are under the rulers of the Church, and are bound by the fourth Commandment to obey them. And besides the general obligation we have of obeying them as our superiors, our Lord repeatedly instructed His disciples in the duty of looking up to the rulers of His Church as those who were acting by His authority and in His place. 'He that heareth you heareth Me.'<sup>1</sup> In another place He said, 'He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.'<sup>2</sup> And S. Paul,

<sup>1</sup> S. Luke x. 16.

<sup>2</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 17.

after assembling the rulers of the Church of Ephesus, said to them, 'Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock over which the Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops, to rule the Church of God.'<sup>3</sup> So that they are placed over us as our spiritual fathers by the authority of God, and we are under an obligation to reverence them, and to obey them in all spiritual matters and such as are connected with our duty to God.<sup>4</sup>

**Different Ends of the Church's Precepts.**—From the time of the Apostles, the Church—'that is, the rulers of the Church'—has given a great many different commands for the good of those whom she had the charge of. They have been different in different times and countries, according as they were needed. Some of them, like the rules about receiving Communion fasting and under one kind, have been made to protect the Sacraments from irreverence. Some of them, like the precept of hearing Mass and observing fast-days, have been with the object of insuring the performance of commands and duties enjoined by God, by appointing a fixed time for them. Many have been given at various times to enforce the stricter observance of God's laws, to guard against particular perversions of them and abuses that prevailed at the time, such as against meats that were offered to idols, and, later on, against usury. Not a few were for the purpose of insuring attention to the care of our souls, like the precepts of Confession and Communion; and a great many rules about marriage were made with the same object. These rules of discipline and precepts of the Church have mostly been only local and temporary, and have passed away when they have effected the object

<sup>3</sup> Acts xx. 28.

<sup>4</sup> 'Obey your potentates and be subject to them, for they watch as having to render an account of your souls' (Heb. xiii. 17).



for which they were made, or when the circumstances of the times were so altered as to make them no longer advisable. And now they are not the same everywhere. But there are some of them that are so important and so universally obligatory, that they are called *the* Commandments of the Church, though there is still some variation in them and in the way they are observed in different countries. And these variations are permitted by the Holy See. What we have to do is to observe them, as good people feel themselves bound to observe them in each country.

**Dispensations.**—As the Church varies her commands according as circumstances make it advisable, so she can cease to teach and enforce them. As she made them she can take them off. It is not like the Commandments of God. Over these she has no power either to change or abate them. She must only teach and inculcate them. She has no power to dispense from their observance. She can only lay down when and how they bind men, and when they do not. But as regards the laws and precepts made by the authority of the Church for the good of men's souls, the Church can change or abolish them. In the early times of the Church, Christians were forbidden to eat blood or animals that were strangled, and they were bound by certain laws of the Church, enjoining heavy penances for particular sins. But the Church no longer binds us by these laws; and she can not only cease to enforce her laws, but she can, if she thinks fit, dispense particular places, or particular persons, or at particular times, from their observance. Bishops have power to dispense from the observance of some of the precepts of the Church in their own dioceses, and sometimes priests in their own parishes. But it is important to note the difference between dispensing from a law, and settling

the question whether a person comes under it. No bishop or priest can dispense from the law of God, and he can only do so from the precepts of the Church if the Church has given him leave. But any confessor or priest is able, according to his learning and knowledge, to guide those who come to him in determining whether the law of God or the Church is applicable to their case.<sup>5</sup>

**The Six Precepts of the Church.**—The Catechism enumerates six commandments, or precepts of the Church, and they are nearly the same in most countries. The first of these is ‘to keep the Sundays and holidays of obligation holy by hearing Mass and resting from servile works.’ The explanation of this is to be found under the third Commandment and under the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, which speaks of the obligation of hearing Mass.

The third is to go to Confession at least once a year, and this is treated of under the Sacrament of Penance.

The fourth, to receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts, comes under the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

The sixth, ‘not to marry within certain degrees of kindred nor to solemnise marriage at the forbidden times,’ comes under the Sacrament of Matrimony. There remain the second and fifth, which must be spoken of here.

**The Second.**—The second is to keep the days of fast-

<sup>5</sup> For example, no priest could give leave to steal or cheat or tell a lie; but, if better instructed than the person who consulted him, he might be able, not to dispense—*i.e.* to excuse—a person from observing the seventh or eighth Commandment, but to declare to him that what he was doing was, or was not, dishonest, or that what he said was, or was not, a lie. He would be acting like a lawyer, who cannot give leave to break the law, but who might be able to say that such and such a thing was *not* breaking it.

ing and abstinence appointed by the Church. And here we have to consider (1) what is meant by fasting and abstinence; (2) which are the days to be observed; (3) how they are kept, and (4) who are those that are bound to keep them.

**Difference between Fasting and Abstinence.**—Abstinence refers to the quality only of the food taken, and not to the quantity; it means abstaining from the use of flesh or meat. Fasting refers to both quantity and quality, and means not only abstaining from meat and sometimes from other sorts of food, but also not taking more than one meal a day, and that not till midday.

**Days of Abstinence and Fasting.**—The days of abstinence are all the Fridays in the year,<sup>6</sup> and the Sundays in Lent, but a dispensation is usually granted from observing these. The fast-days are the forty days of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday, the Ember-days, the Vigils of certain great Feasts, and in England the Wednesdays and Fridays in Advent.

**How they are to be kept.**—The rule for keeping abstinence-days is simple enough, as it consists in abstaining from the use of flesh-meat, or anything that belongs to or is made from it, like soups and jellies. But in England leave has been given to use dripping or lard, as these are much in use in some places, and it is not easy for those who are poor to supply their place with anything else. The rules of fasting are much more difficult to understand. Fasting properly means going without food, and this is what we mean now when we speak of going to Communion fasting. In old times a fast-day was observed, as it is in some parts of the Church now, by taking no food till the evening meal. And it still means that only one full meal can be taken.

<sup>6</sup> The Saturdays are also days of abstinence in some countries.

But the Church has allowed a good many different relaxations to this rule in various countries. With us it is permitted to take a cup of tea or coffee or chocolate in the morning and a trifling amount of bread with it. And in addition to the one meal a sort of half-meal or 'collation' is allowed in the evening. Those who find that they are better able to fast by taking this collation at midday and the meal in the evening are permitted to do so. It must be borne in mind that all fast-days are also abstinence-days, so that no meat can be eaten either at the one meal or the collation. These are the rules for ordinary fast-days; but the fast of Lent has some particular rules of its own, as in it not only flesh-meat, but what are called white meats, eggs, butter, cheese, and milk are forbidden. But to prevent the fast from being too hard on those who might not be strong enough to do without their usual food, the bishop of each diocese gives certain dispensations at the beginning of Lent, both to those who are bound to fast and those who are only bound to abstain, to eat flesh-meat and white meats on certain days each week. And so it happens that some persons have got to fast and yet not to abstain. This is not the rule of the Church, but a dispensation from the rule.

**Who are bound to fast and abstain.**—Such are the rules of abstinence and fasting, for those who fall under them, and every one falls under the rule of abstinence who is a member of the Church and has come to the use of reason. There are many who do not abstain; but this is not because they are not bound by the law of the Church, but because they have obtained a dispensation, either on account of weak health<sup>7</sup> or difficulty in getting such food as they are allowed to eat. But as to fasting,

<sup>7</sup> Those who are ill and under medical care may take whatever the doctor prescribes, when they are not able to seek a dispensation

the rules do not bind (1) those who are under twenty-one years of age, (2) the old or such as have reached the age of sixty, (3) those who are sick, (4) those who are engaged in servile or laborious bodily work. Travellers were also considered to be exempted because of the great fatigue they suffered; but this is not quite so clear a case as the other, because travelling is now so much easier and less fatiguing than it used to be. Thus it will be seen that a very large proportion of persons are not bound to fast, but they are bound to abstain on fast-days, as well as on days of abstinence. If they are not included under any of the four classes above mentioned, and are yet unable to fast, they should state their reason to the priest of their parish and ask for a dispensation. But if they will not take the trouble to do this, and wilfully break this command of the Church, they commit sin, though if the amount of food taken is trifling it would not be a grievous sin.

**The Fifth Commandment of the Church.**—There remains the fifth Commandment of the Church, ‘to contribute to the support of our pastors.’ As the second Commandment of the Church enforces the practice of fasting enjoined by our Lord, so does the fifth enforce the practice of almsgiving, specifying a particular object for it which has claims of justice on us as well as charity. For besides setting apart a portion of our means to be dedicated to the service of God, we have to consider who have most claim to our assistance. There are some who have a right to be attended to before others, because they belong to us, and are under our care, or are engaged in our work. We ought to attend to their wants before those of others. Every one sees the duty of a man’s assisting the members of his own family and household, his own workmen and dependents, before others. This

is the meaning of the saying that 'Charity begins at home.' S. Paul speaks of Christians who neglect those of their own household as being worse than infidels.<sup>8</sup> And he uses the same sort of argument in enforcing on the first Christians the duty of supporting their pastors. In the old times the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of the altar, and had no inheritance given to it in the Land of Promise like the other tribes; God giving command that it should be supported by the offerings of the people. So it is in the Christian Church. Those who dedicate themselves to the service of the altar are called on to give up other occupations and employments, and not to entangle themselves in the affairs of the world, that they may be free to attend to their ministry. They are not allowed to charge for their services or for administering the Sacraments. They must live on whatever offerings the people give them.

**Way of fulfilling it.**—There are various ways of making these offerings. In some places special collections are made at Christmas and Easter for the support of the Church and clergy. In others, this is done by the offertory on Sundays and holidays. In others, the faithful take occasion of a baptism, a marriage, or other Sacrament, to make an offering, or when they ask the priest to offer the Holy Sacrifice for their benefit or intention. Our Lord, when sending out His disciples to preach, said that the labourer was worthy of his hire.<sup>9</sup> S. Paul reminds the Corinthians that the ox who treads out the corn is allowed to eat it;<sup>10</sup> and asks them whether it is a great matter that those who wait on them, and are ready at any time to serve them in what they need for their souls, should, in return, be supported in the necessities

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. v. 8.

<sup>9</sup> S. Luke x. 7.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. ix. 9.



of life.<sup>11</sup> This is why the Catechism speaks of our *being bound in conscience and justice* to contribute to the support of our pastors, because they are serving us. Each one belongs to a mission or parish, in which the church, the school, and the services of the priest are for the use and benefit of those who belong to it. But, then, these must be supported by those for whose benefit they exist. And, in this country, there are ordinarily no other means of paying the expenses of the church, helping the poor, and maintaining the clergy and the school, except the offerings and subscriptions of the parishioners. This is, then, the duty which is commanded by the fifth precept of the Church. As soon, therefore, as we come to earn our own living, or have means of our own, we are bound to this duty, according to our ability. No particular amount can be fixed, as this depends not only on what we have, but also on what our necessary expenses are. But it ought to be remembered (1) that those who have very small means, like servants or working people, are not excused from this duty, though they cannot give largely;<sup>12</sup> and (2) that those do not fulfil this command who only give what is left, after providing, not merely for the necessities of life, but also for luxuries and amusements. For this Commandment of the Church does not speak of almsgiving of devotion, but of almsgiving of obligation, which ought to be a regular part of each one's expenditure before he lays out his means in unnecessary and superfluous expenses.

<sup>11</sup> 'If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?' (1 Cor. ix. 11.)

<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 1.



Part the Fourth.

THE SACRAMENTS AND PRAYER.

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CHAPTER XXXVIII.

MEANING OF SACRAMENTS.

INSTITUTION BY CHRIST ; DIFFERENT FROM SACRAMENTS OF THE OLD LAW ; AND FROM SACRAMENTALS ; HOW THE SACRAMENTS DIFFER FROM EACH OTHER ; THEIR ORDER.

THE word Sacrament, as it was used by old writers, meant any sacred thing with a secret meaning. It had almost the same signification as the word 'mystery.' But as we use it now it does not mean any sacred mystery, but those particular mysteries that our Lord instituted to be the principal means by which each one of us can obtain for ourselves the graces and benefits of His Sacred Passion. For we are saved by the Blood of Christ—that is, by His sufferings and death ; and the channels by which the Precious Blood reaches us are the seven Sacraments. The Catechism says that the Sacraments have the power of giving grace from the merits of Christ's Precious Blood, which they apply to our souls.

**Institution by Christ.**—There are seven of these Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. These seven Sacraments are very different from one another in many important points ; but they are all

alike in these three respects : (1) that they consist of some outward words and actions of the persons who administer them ; (2) that they all have an inward grace attached to them which goes along with the outward sign or action ; and (3) that they were all instituted by Christ ; for it is God alone who gives grace and could attach it to an outward sign. The outward sign is, as it were, the body of the Sacrament ; and the inward grace is its invisible soul or life, which God alone could give to it.

**Different from Sacraments of the Old Law.**—To understand the nature and institution of the Sacraments fully, we must remember that under the law of Moses there were a great many religious ceremonies which had a mysterious meaning. God instructed His people by these ceremonies how they were to honour Him and sanctify themselves. Thus they were commanded to dedicate all their male children to God by the rite of circumcision, which was a painful cutting of the flesh. Their prophets and priests and kings were consecrated by being anointed with oil. Those who were unclean through sin or disease were to be separated from the rest until they were purified and healed. They were commanded to wash themselves as a sign of their purification, and to show their intention of leading a new life. They had to offer sacrifices for their sins, and in remembrance of God's gifts and mercies to them. Their life was full of these sacred ceremonies and ordinances, which were a means (1) of their worshipping God, and (2) learning to keep themselves pure. These ceremonies were signs to the people of what they ought to be, and they are therefore sometimes called the Sacraments of the Old Law. When our Lord came He did not abolish all these old ceremonies ; but He took some of the simplest and commonest of them, and raised them to be Sacraments of the New Law.

In the Old Law a person washed his body as a sign of his good intention to get rid of his past bad ways, and to signify the purity that there ought to be on his soul; but this could not make his soul pure of itself. The sacrifices they offered and partook of could not take away sins or strengthen their souls. And when they anointed with oil those who were sick or those who were consecrated to God, there was no promise that they could get health of body or grace in their souls by these ceremonies. They were signs of what they were taught to seek; and when they did seek it with faith and earnestness, God would no doubt reward them by giving it to them. But our Lord instructed His Apostles to use these outward signs and words in His name, and promised that His grace should accompany them; and so, through His institution, they are now able not only to *signify* a spiritual good, but to give it.

And from Sacramentals.—Just as the Christian Sacraments differ from the Sacraments of the Old Law, so do they differ from what are called *sacramentals*. There are a great many devotions and pious practices in use amongst Christians and sanctioned by the Church which have not been instituted by our Lord. Such are the use of holy water, and other blessed things, such as ashes, candles, palms, scapulars, medals, Agnus Deis, habits, rosaries and crucifixes, images and pictures. These things may bring grace and spiritual good to those who receive them, through their faith, piety, and fervour, and through the prayers and blessing of the Church. Sometimes things that are blessed signify the inward qualities that the wearer ought to have. Thus white garments signify purity of soul; and the dresses of monks and nuns are emblematic of a spirit of penance. But these habits will not give a spirit of penance, any more than wearing

surplices will make the wearers pure of heart. It is in this that these sacramentals differ from Sacraments. They do not give the grace they signify by the promise of Christ as Sacraments do. They are like Sacraments in consisting of an outward sign or ceremony; but they are unlike the Sacraments, (1) because they were not instituted by Christ, and (2) consequently they do not contain and give grace of themselves, but only by virtue of the prayers of the Church and our own good dispositions. But the seven Sacraments are all of them alike in consisting of some outward sign or ceremony which, by the institution of Christ, brings with it some grace. And this grace is sometimes called Sacramental Grace, because it is obtained by a Sacrament.

**How the Sacraments differ from each other.**—But in other respects they differ very widely from each other. (1) In importance to us. For one, Baptism, is necessary for all; others, like Penance and the Holy Eucharist, are enjoined on all who have come to the use of reason; and others, like Matrimony and Holy Orders, are not necessary as a means of salvation. (2) In their dignity; one, especially, so far exceeding the others as to be ordinarily called *the Blessed Sacrament*. (3) In their effects, which are very different in some Sacraments from what they are in others, not only as to the sort of grace they give, but as to the powers they give, and the privileges they bestow. (4) In regard to the disposition and preparation required for receiving them. (5) In the frequency with which they can be received. (6) In the ministers or persons authorised to give them. So that while alike in having the nature of Sacraments, in other respects they are very different from each other. These differences will be seen more clearly as each Sacrament is spoken of.

**Their Order.**—There is a certain order in the Sacra-

ments as they are given in the Catechism, Baptism coming first, because it must be received before any other, and Confirmation next, as being generally received next, and as completing the grace of Baptism. The Holy Eucharist comes next, as highest in dignity and next to Baptism in necessity. Penance next in necessity, in case of mortal sin; Extreme Unction the last of all those generally necessary, being only received when in danger of death. Finally come Holy Orders and Matrimony, as not being necessary means of salvation for all: the former providing for the continuance of the priesthood, and the latter of the human race.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### BAPTISM.

FIRST IN ORDER ; TYPES OF IT ; ITS INSTITUTION ; OUTWARD SIGN ; MINISTER ; EFFECTS : CLEANSING FROM SIN ; MADE CHILDREN OF GOD ; DISPOSITIONS AND PROMISES ; OBLIGATIONS.

**First in Order.**—Baptism comes first of the Sacraments because it must be received first. We are not capable of receiving the grace or benefit of any other Sacrament till we have been baptised. It also comes first because of all the Sacraments it is most necessary for our salvation. Millions are saved with only this Sacrament ; but no one is ordinarily saved without it.<sup>1</sup> We put no limit indeed to God's power ; but it is God Himself who has appointed it to be the way in which man must be saved.<sup>2</sup> And thirdly, it comes first because inasmuch as it gives faith it is the entrance to a supernatural life ; nor can the other Sacraments, and subjects that concern the spiritual life, be clearly understood unless we have a full and definite knowledge of what Baptism does for us.

**Types of Baptism.**—Its great importance is shown in its having been typified in the Old Testament. S. Peter refers to the Deluge as a figure of Baptism.<sup>3</sup> And S.

<sup>1</sup> Those who have been martyred before they had been actually baptised are commonly said to have received the Baptism of blood. Those who earnestly desire to receive Baptism, and are determined to do God's will, if they die without Baptism, are said to have received the Baptism of desire. 'Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God' (1 S. John iv. 7).

<sup>2</sup> S. Mark xvi. 16.

<sup>3</sup> 1 S. Peter iii. 21.

Paul<sup>4</sup> speaks of the Israelites being baptised in the Red Sea, through which they had to pass to escape from their enemy and oppressor on their way to the Promised Land; just as we are washed in Christ's Blood, and so are delivered from the power of the devil, and are put on the way of life everlasting. When Elias cured Naaman of his leprosy by making him wash in the Jordan, this foreshadowed the washing of Baptism by which (as Isaias prophesied<sup>5</sup>) men were to be washed from sin and uncleanness.

**Institution.**—Baptism was in use among the Jews before the time of our Lord as a religious ceremony. It means washing, and the Jews were enjoined in the law of Moses to wash their bodies to signify the cleansing of their souls. So when multitudes of people went out into the desert to see S. John the Baptist, and hear his preaching, those who were converted by him went down into the river Jordan and were baptised, or washed, by him, confessing their sins. This Baptism had no power to take away their sins; but it was an outward and public expression of their intention to put off their past sins and impurities, and to lead a clean life for the future. And so when our Lord, as a great act of humility, presented Himself as a sinner to be baptised, and compelled S. John to baptise Him,<sup>6</sup> this action of our Lord is considered by some as the institution of Baptism, inasmuch as our Lord then sanctified the water by His use of it, and endowed it with the power of cleansing the soul. From that time those who followed Christ and became His disciples were baptised by His Apostles. However, the more formal institution of it as a Sacrament, necessary for all who would be saved, was when our Lord sent

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Isai. lv. 1.

<sup>6</sup> See the account in S. Matt. iii.



forth His disciples to preach throughout the world, and to baptise those who believed, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. From that time, at least, Baptism was no longer a religious ceremony expressing an intention and desire of a pure life; but through the power of Christ it actually produced this purity of soul which was washed by Christ's Blood, as, and at the time, the water was poured over the body. It no longer signified this effect, but produced it. He instituted the Sacrament of Baptism by taking this simple outward ceremony of washing with water, and directing His Apostles to administer it with a certain form of words, and promised that when this was done, He would be present with His grace. In this institution of Baptism by our Lord we have the different parts of the Sacrament: the outward sign or ceremony, consisting of the thing or matter made use of, and the form of words pronounced, the minister or person who may give the Sacrament, and the conditions on which he may give it. A little explanation must be given of each.

**Outward Sign.**—As Baptism means washing, so the outward action or sign of Baptism is washing with water. The water commonly used is solemnly blessed in the font on Holy Saturday for this purpose, but any ordinary common water is sufficient. It does not hinder the effect of the Sacrament if it is given with salt water, or rain water, or boiled water, or even dirty water; but it must not have anything else mixed with it in so large a quantity that we should no longer call it water, but water *and* something else. The person may be baptised by *immersion*, or going into the water, or being dipped into it, as used to be done in old times, or by the water being poured over him, or even sprinkled over him, so long as the water really runs over the skin and wets it, else there

is no washing at all. Then there is the form of words : 'I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' which the priest must say while he is baptising the child, and not after or before. And he must say the whole of these words. If he left out any it would not be true Baptism. And of course he must say them meaning to baptise ; as if he said the words and poured the water in joke, or merely to show how Baptism was given, he would have no *intention* of baptising. But intention is not the same as *attention*. Want of attention, *i.e.* being distracted while he says the words, does not prevent its being true Baptism.

**Minister.**—The minister of Baptism, or the person authorised to give it, is a priest. It was to His Apostles that our Lord gave His commission to baptise. As, however, Baptism is necessary to salvation, the Church allows any one to baptise a person sooner than that he should be left without Baptism. If a child is dying, or a grown-up person who desires to be baptised, and a priest cannot be had, it may be done by any one else ; but it should be done by some one who understands well how to do it, and by a man rather than a woman, and whoever gives it must be careful to do so according to the rules given above. When once given rightly and properly by any one, it can never be repeated. But if it is at all doubtful whether it has been properly given, it must be given again 'under condition,' *i.e.* in case anything is amiss in the first Baptism, as sometimes happens when it is received at the hands of laymen or persons out of the Church. But no one is, or ever can be, really 'baptised again,' and it is a sin to attempt to do it.

**Effects: Cleansing from Sin.**—The reason of this will be plain if we consider that what Baptism does for us is done once for all, and does not require to be repeated.

Baptism means, and represents, washing; and the principal effect of Baptism, from which the other effects follow, is the washing the soul clean from sin. Baptism does this very perfectly. Whatever the sin is, mortal or venial, whether committed by ourselves or inherited from our first parents, Baptism washes away both the stain or guilt, and also forgives all the punishment due on account of it. Most persons being but infants when they receive this Sacrament have not any actual sin to answer for. In their case, therefore, it takes away original sin. It is the only Sacrament that does take it away. It takes it away once for all. No subsequent sins will bring back original sin, or make a person as though he had never been baptised.

**Made Children of God.**—The other effects of Baptism follow from the first. It is God who made us, and made us to love Him, and it is only sin that separates us from His love. As soon, therefore, as we are released from the dominion of sin, and of its author, the devil, God at once receives us into His favour or grace. What took place at the Baptism of our Lord was a representation of the effects of Baptism on each one of us. Directly Jesus came up out of the water the Holy Spirit descended on Him, and the voice of the Father pronounced Him His beloved Son. And the effects of Baptism come on each one of us as soon as we are cleansed from sin. We receive back again the robe of original justice, which was lost by original sin; the Holy Spirit descends on our souls, endowing them with His graces, and especially the seeds of Faith, Hope, and Charity; and our Heavenly Father acknowledges us as His own children whom He loves. These effects are expressed in the Catechism by saying that ‘Baptism makes us Christians, children of God, and members of His Church.’ We are accustomed to take

Baptism as a matter of course ; but there are some parts of Christian doctrine and of the spiritual life which we cannot understand properly unless we have come to realise that Baptism is the beginning of the supernatural life in us, and puts those who have received it into an altogether different and higher state from unbaptised persons. The Apostles and early Fathers of the Church use expressions about the effects of Baptism, which seem strange to our ears, because we do not value the high privileges and wonderful graces we receive by it. 'Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be named, *and should be*, the sons of God.'<sup>7</sup> But the most striking thing about the effects of Baptism is the expression our Lord Himself used about it. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, was struck by our Lord's miracles and teaching, and came to Him by night to be instructed by Him. Our Lord began by teaching him about Baptism, that to enter the kingdom of heaven a man must be 'born again.' And when Nicodemus asked how it was possible for a man to be born a second time, our Lord explained that he must be born again through water and the Holy Spirit, not as to the flesh, but the Spirit.<sup>8</sup> Here is the outward sign of Baptism spoken of, and the inward gift of the Holy Spirit, and the effects described as nothing less than being born again. Hence the expression which is commonly applied to Baptism of *regeneration*<sup>9</sup> or new birth. The birth of the flesh is the birth of our natural life ; the birth of the Spirit is our entrance on a supernatural life, which is given us through the Holy Ghost in Baptism. It is by maintaining this supernatural life that we must earn a supernatural reward. Baptism does nothing less than raise us to a state that is supernatural. The effects, then, of

<sup>7</sup> 1 S. John iii. 1.

<sup>8</sup> S. John iii. 6.

<sup>9</sup> Titus iii. 5.

Baptism are threefold. First, the washing of our souls from the stain of all sin, and from the punishment due to it. Secondly, as the consequence of the first, being received back into God's grace and favour, adopted as His children, as members of His kingdom on earth, and heirs of His kingdom in heaven. And thirdly, receiving certain gifts, especially the seeds of Faith, Hope, and Charity, infused into our souls, and a right to the other graces provided for His children by God, in order to their persevering in His service.

**Dispositions and Promises.**—Baptism does not depend for its effects on the dispositions of the person who receives it so much as other Sacraments. Yet it is not given without certain conditions. Baptism is only given to those (1) who believe, (2) desire to receive it, (3) are sorry for past sins if they have committed any, and (4) solemnly engage to renounce the service of Satan. If Baptism is received by one who has come to the use of reason, he has to be instructed in these conditions and to undertake them for himself. In the case of infants, who cannot answer for themselves, these conditions are undertaken by the sponsors, *i.e.* those who answer for them. When a child is brought to be baptised the priest questions the child himself by name. 'What dost thou ask of the Church of God?' and the sponsors make answer for it, 'Faith.' He afterwards asks the child three questions, —'if he renounces the devil and all his works and all his pomps,'—and each time the promise is given by the sponsors. Then later on he questions the child whether he believes in God the Father, in God the Son, in God the Holy Ghost. And the sponsors each time make profession of their faith. And lastly, they too express for the child the desire to be baptised. The conditions, then, on which Baptism is given are fulfilled by the sponsors, who

answer in the name of the child, and undertake so far as they can to see that the child, when he comes to the use of reason, is instructed in what has been promised for him, and endeavours to fulfil it for himself, as it is on the faith of the promises made for him that he has been admitted to the benefits of Baptism. The Church does not mean the office of sponsor to be an empty form. 'Every one after he has been born requires a nurse and instructor, by whose assistance and attention he may be brought up and instructed in learning and useful knowledge; so also it is necessary that those who by the water of Baptism begin to live a spiritual life should be consigned to the fidelity and prudence of some one from whom they may imbibe the precepts of the Christian religion, and by whom they may be instructed in every manner of Christian piety, and thus gradually grow up in Christ until, with the Lord's help, they at length arrive at Christian manhood.'<sup>10</sup> It is not meant that the sponsors should take the duty of bringing up the children out of the hands of the parents, but that they should assist the parents, and be an additional guarantee for the instruction and Christian conduct of the child. And in case of the death of the parents, or their neglect of this duty, it falls then into the hands of the sponsors to supply as far as they can for the deficiency. It is not right, therefore, unless in case of necessity, that children, or those who have not yet been confirmed, or those who are living in habitual neglect of their own religious duties, should stand sponsors for the Christian instruction and conduct of others. He who stands surety for another should be one who understands and fulfils his own responsibilities.

**Obligations.**—But while the sponsors have the duty of taking care that the child is instructed when old enough

<sup>10</sup> Catechism of Council of Trent.



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in the faith that they have professed for him, and the promises they have made in his behalf, the obligation of keeping up that faith and obeying the Commandments of God falls on the child. He is bound to keep the promises of the sponsors as soon as he knows them. These promises are often called our baptismal vows, for they are serious obligations, and undertaken for us. The office of Baptism concludes with reminding us of their solemnity and obligation; for as soon as the child is baptised the priest puts a white cloth or garment over him, an emblem of the purity and innocence which he possesses now that the stain of original sin is washed off. 'Receive,' the priest says, 'this white garment, and see thou carry it without stain before the Judgment-seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life.' Then placing a lighted candle in the hands of the sponsors, he says, 'Receive this burning light, and keep thy Baptism so as to be without blame; keep the Commandments of God, that when the Lord shall come to the nuptials thou mayest meet Him in the company of all the Saints, and live for ever and ever.'



## CHAPTER XL.

### CONFIRMATION.

NATURE OF THIS SACRAMENT ; ITS INSTITUTION AND MINISTER ;  
OUTWARD SIGN ; EFFECTS ; DISPOSITIONS.

**Nature of Confirmation.**—Confirmation comes next in order after Baptism, because it used to be, and often is now, the next Sacrament that is received after Baptism. Indeed, in old times children used to be confirmed immediately after Baptism ; for Confirmation is a sort of completion of Baptism, Baptism making us Christians, and Confirmation making us perfect Christians. Now, it is not usual to give Confirmation until a child has come to the use of reason, and is sufficiently instructed in religion to know what was done for it by Baptism, and what its godfather and godmother promised for it, so that it may be confirmed in the faith and practice of a Christian with full knowledge of what it has undertaken and full resolution to live up to it.

**Institution and Minister.**—It is not known for certain when our Lord ordained this Sacrament. Very likely during the forty days after His Resurrection, when S. Luke tells us<sup>1</sup> that He instructed His Apostles, and spoke to them of what related to the kingdom of God. For we see that the Apostles made a practice from the first of giving this Sacrament to all who believed and were baptised. When Philip the deacon had converted multitudes of people in Samaria, as soon as the Apostles

<sup>1</sup> Acts i. 3.

in Jerusalem heard of it they sent down two of their number, Peter and John, to lay hands on them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.<sup>2</sup> And at Ephesus S. Paul laid his hands on those who had been baptised, and the Holy Ghost came upon them.<sup>3</sup> And this gives us the proof of what the Catechism says, that the ordinary minister of this Sacrament must be a Bishop. S. Peter and S. John were sent to Samaria because S. Philip could not confirm those whom he had baptised.

**Outward Signs.**—Confirmation was given by the Bishop imposing or laying his hands on the person to be confirmed, and anointing him with the holy oil called the Chrism. Hence this Sacrament used in old times to be called sometimes imposition of hands, sometimes unction or anointing, sometimes simply by the Greek word *Chrism*, which means the same thing; sometimes sealing with the Holy Ghost.<sup>4</sup> For when the Bishop lays his hands on the person to be confirmed and signs him with the holy chrism on the forehead, he marks or signs him as one who is accepted as a child of God and a member of the kingdom of God here and in heaven. He receives this character once for all; and hence Confirmation can never be repeated. It would be absurd for a person to come again to receive what he already possesses—the recognised character of a Christian. The chrism or holy oil used in Confirmation is one of the three oils blessed by the Bishop on Maundy Thursday, and it is considered the most sacred of them. It consists of oil of olives mixed with balsam, and is used also at Baptism and in the Ordination of Priests. The form of words used by the Bishop as he makes the sign of the Cross with it on the

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix.

<sup>4</sup> 'Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you have been sealed unto the day of redemption' (Eph. iv. 20).

forehead is, 'I sign thee with the sign of the Cross; I confirm thee with the Chrism of salvation; in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.'

**Effects.**—It has been already said that Confirmation marks us with the character of full or perfect Christians confirmed in our profession. This, then, is one effect of this Sacrament. But the greatest effect of the Sacrament is to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit into our hearts to support and confirm us in this profession. We must bear in mind that our being raised to a supernatural state, or being sanctified, is the work of the Holy Ghost in our souls. This work is begun when we are born again of water and the Holy Ghost; but it leaves us like 'new-born infants,'<sup>5</sup> pure and innocent, but weak and helpless. But when we have advanced in years we need that this spiritual life, begun in us at Baptism, should be strengthened and perfected; and this is the special grace given to us by the Holy Ghost in Confirmation. And so this is what we ask for in the prayers that are used in administering this Sacrament: 'Confirm, O God, that which Thou hast wrought in us' in Baptism. This strengthening grace is represented by the anointing with oil, the effect of which on the body is to strengthen, so that the wrestlers in the public games used to anoint themselves with it. And as we receive this Sacrament at a time when we, like them, are going forth into the world to wrestle, not only with it and with the flesh, but with 'the spirit of wickedness,' we need, at this time, a particular strength and courage infused into our souls. This is just what this Sacrament gives us, the gift of *the Holy Ghost, in order to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.* In this world we are members of the Church Militant; our very work and calling

<sup>5</sup> 1 S. Pet. ii. 2.

is to fight against the enemies of God and of our soul. As those who are preparing themselves for fighting practise themselves in facing hardships and enduring pain, so those who are going forth to contend against the world and its temptations must be ready to encounter difficulties with spirit, and not to lose courage if they meet with ill-usage or ridicule from others. This is the meaning of the sign of the Cross being made by the Bishop on the forehead and giving a little slap on the cheek of the person whom he is confirming; for the grace which Confirmation gives is not meant to do instead of our own exertions, but to help them. When we are armed with the strength given us in that Sacrament we go forth and profess our faith, and stand up for it, not making much account of whatever blows or rebuffs we may receive. We have an example of the effects of the gift of the Holy Ghost in the Apostles, who were before so weak and timid that, when our Lord was apprehended in the Garden of Gethsemani, all forsook Him and fled; but after the Holy Ghost had descended on them were not afraid to speak out before the magistrates who apprehended them, so that they marvelled at the constancy of such unlearned and ignorant men.<sup>6</sup> In the early days of the Church those who were confirmed often received, not merely the special grace which belongs to this Sacrament, but also miraculous powers of speaking with tongues and prophesying as the Apostles did on the Day of Pentecost. These miraculous gifts were given for the sake of others, and were useful and necessary for converting them to the true faith. We have many instances in the Acts of the Apostles of these gifts being received at Confirmation. But the grace of being strengthened to profess and act up to our faith, which is

<sup>6</sup> Acts iv. 13.

necessary for our own good, is given to us now as much as to those who received it in the Apostles' time.

**Dispositions.**—This, however, depends on the Sacrament being received properly. It is a Sacrament of the living, and so must be received in a state of grace. To receive it in mortal sin would be a sacrilege; the character or mark would be received, but not the grace of this Sacrament; nor could it be given a second time. Besides preparing for this Sacrament by a careful confession, it is necessary that all who receive it, after having come to the use of reason, should be instructed in the belief and duty of a Christian. It is usual, therefore, for those who are to be confirmed to receive instructions previously, and to receive permission to be confirmed from some one who has ascertained that they are properly instructed. This Sacrament comes just at the time when they are old enough to know the promises that they made by their sponsors in Baptism, and which they have now got to keep. The best preparation, therefore, for receiving it is to be well instructed in what they have to believe and do, and to be firmly resolved to fulfil these obligations with spirit and courage. This is the meaning of each person being presented to the Bishop by a sponsor, who answers for his being prepared and willing to do his part.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

ITS INSTITUTION; NAMES; OUTWARD SIGN AND INWARD GRACE; PROOFS OF THE DOCTRINE; ENDS OF THIS SACRAMENT; EXTERNAL OBJECT OF DEVOTION; INTERNAL FOOD OF THE SOUL; OBLIGATION OF RECEPTION; COMMAND OF THE CHURCH; DISPOSITIONS; FREQUENCY OF COMMUNION.

**Institution.**—An exact account of the institution of the Holy Eucharist is given us in nearly the same words by S. Matthew, S. Mark, S. Luke, and S. Paul.<sup>1</sup> Our Lord had sent two of His Apostles into Jerusalem to prepare the Passover, or Pasch, in a large upper chamber called the guest-chamber. And in the evening He came and sat down with His disciples to celebrate it. After the Paschal Feast was over our Lord washed His disciples' feet, and then He took bread, and, giving thanks, He blessed it and brake it, and gave it to them, saying, 'Take ye and eat: this is My Body which is given for you; do this in commemoration of Me.' And taking the chalice He gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of this; for this is My Blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.' This was the evening of Maundy Thursday, the same night in which He was betrayed.

**Names.**—This Sacrament is called by several names. It is called the Holy Eucharist, or Thanksgiving, because when our Lord ordained it He 'gave thanks,' and be-

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xxvi.; S. Mark xiv.; S. Luke xxii.; 1 Cor. xi.

cause it was instituted as a sacrifice of thanksgiving. It is called the Sacrament of the Altar, because it is consecrated and offered on the altar. It is called Holy Communion, because our Lord gave it to His disciples assembled together, desiring that by it they should be joined in communion with Him and with one another.<sup>2</sup> But when Communion is given to those who are passing out of this world to the next it is called Holy Viaticum, meaning food for a journey. Lastly, it is very often called the Blessed Sacrament, because, though all the Sacraments may rightly be called blessed, yet this is the first and highest in dignity, inasmuch as it is not merely a gift of God which we receive in it, but our Lord Himself Incarnate is given to us.

**Outward Sign and Inward Grace.**—The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist differs from all the rest, not only in its dignity, but also in its nature. In the other Sacraments the outward sign represents the grace that is there and then given to us; but in the Holy Eucharist the bread and wine, which are the outward sign, are changed in substance into that which they signify, and are only bread and wine in appearance; so that after consecration they are no longer bread and wine, but it is our Lord who is *really present* there. The outward sign, then, in this Sacrament is not the sign of the inward grace, but is the inward grace, or rather the fountain and author of grace. The Creed of Pius IV. lays down these two doctrines of the *Real Presence* and of *Transubstantiation* very clearly, defining that in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist ‘there is truly and really the substance of the Body and Blood together with the Soul and Divine Nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that

<sup>2</sup> ‘We being many are one bread and (so) one body, all (of us) that partake of one bread’ (1 Cor. x. 17).



the entire substance of the bread is changed into His Body, and the entire substance of the wine into His Blood, which change the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation.' This passage brings out that the Real Presence of our Lord in the Holy Eucharist is not merely the Presence of His Body and Blood, but of Himself in His living Body, as He was on earth after His Resurrection, when He had still a true human body, but in a spiritual and glorified state.<sup>3</sup> This wonderful change took place when our Lord said the words, 'This is My Body,' 'This is the chalice of My Blood.' Hence these words are called the words of consecration, and are used by the priest as the minister of Christ, and acting in His place whenever he says Mass at the altar.

**Proofs of the Doctrine.**—As this doctrine is a difficult one, there have been many who have at different times opposed and impugned it. Our reason for believing it is because the Church, which cannot err in her teaching, declares its truth. But it may be of some use to consider the proofs of it that are given in Holy Scripture. When our Lord was on earth He worked two or three miracles which were of the same character with this that is done in the Holy Eucharist. His first miracle was the changing of the water into wine at the marriage feast of Cana. On more than one occasion He fed great multitudes of people by multiplying loaves of bread and fishes. And after working the first of these miracles, He discoursed to His disciples on 'the food which the Son of

<sup>3</sup> Our Lord was seen by His Apostles in a glorified state at His Transfiguration, when S. Luke says that the appearance of His countenance was changed. After His Resurrection, when our Lord's body was a spiritual one, on more than one occasion we find that His disciples did not at first know Him.

Man will give you.' Upon this some of them asked Him for a sign, *i.e.* a miracle from heaven, that they might see and believe in Him. 'What dost Thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' Our Lord answered them that 'His Father gave them the true bread from heaven; the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.' 'I am the Bread of Life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and they died. This is the Bread descending down from heaven, that if any one eat of it he may not die. I am the Living Bread that came down from heaven. If any man eat of this Bread he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world.' The Jews did not understand Him to be speaking in any mystical or figurative sense, for they said among themselves, 'How can this man give us His flesh to eat?' But our Lord, instead of explaining His words and showing that they were not to be taken literally, reasserted them. 'Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you.' We have, then, very clear proof of this doctrine. (1) Because our Lord prepared His disciples beforehand by miracles of a similar kind, and because He Himself led His disciples from the consideration of one of these miracles to the greater miracle of 'the bread from heaven which the Father will give you.' (2) Our Lord referred to the manna as a type of the true bread from heaven. (3) He asserted repeatedly to His disciples and the Jews that the bread which He would give for the life of the world was His Flesh. (4) Before a year had passed He solemnly instituted the Holy Eucharist, blessing bread and saying, 'This is My Body,' and telling His Apostles

at the same time to continue to do what He was then doing, in commemoration of Him.<sup>4</sup>

What is hardest to believe in this doctrine is not that God, who is Almighty, to whom nothing is impossible or difficult, should change one thing into another, but that the Lord of all glory is under the appearance of corporal food. But it is not more wonderful than that He should be born as a helpless infant at Bethlehem; that He should live in obscurity for nearly thirty years at Nazareth; and that He should humble Himself to die, under the appearance of a criminal, on the Cross.<sup>5</sup> God, who is infinitely great, does not demean or degrade Himself, as earthly sovereigns might do, by such an act. He is great and high, but He is also, as we should say in speaking of a man, humble and simple, and without the pride of human greatness. And He does not think it beneath Him to come down to the simple notions and capacities and wants of the creatures whom He has made and loves so much. To give Himself to us as our food is of a piece with the other things He has done for us. It is a miracle that tries the faith of irreligious men, but it is the inward support and consolation of the servants of God.

**Ends of this Sacrament: External Devotion.**—As, then, our Lord is in this Sacrament really present amongst us, though in a hidden and mysterious manner, this Sacrament is an object of supreme worship and devotion. Hence we are taught not only to pay the highest kind of adoration to the Blessed Sacrament when we are in Its presence, but Its presence is marked in every church

<sup>4</sup> S. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem in the fourth century, says: ‘As Christ Himself declared and said, “This is My Body,” who would dare to doubt it? As He openly protested, saying, “This is My Blood,” who would hesitate and say that it is not His Blood?’

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Butler’s *Third Catechism*.

by a light which must be always kept burning before It. And we are taught, as one of the best devotions, to come frequently into the church, and make 'visits' to the Blessed Sacrament, praying before the tabernacle in which It reposes. And in order that we may remember and realise the presence of our Lord under this simple form, the Church has two festivals in the year—Maundy Thursday and Corpus Christi—in which the Blessed Sacrament is specially honoured with as much of outward reverence and solemnity as is possible, to bring this truth home to our minds. There are also, in most churches, other occasions when the Blessed Sacrament is brought out of the tabernacle and exposed on a sort of throne, in a 'monstrance' or 'remonstrance,' and outwardly worshipped, with psalms and hymns sung before It, with litanies and prayers, with incense, lights, flowers, and watchers. This is called the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament;<sup>6</sup> and next to the Mass, there is no more common service of worship and devotion than Benediction or Blessing of the Blessed Sacrament, given by the priest after It has been exposed for a short time on the altar, and some hymns of praise have been sung before It.

**Internal Food of our Souls.**—But while it is natural and necessary that all who believe in the Real Presence of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament should reverence It, and show their devotion to It, yet our Lord gave It to us as a means of closer and more intimate union with Him. The Blessed Sacrament is not only an external

<sup>6</sup> When, as in some countries, this Exposition is carried on for two days, it is called the 'Quarant' Ore,' or Forty Hours' Exposition. This particular form of devotion took its rise in Italy on the occasion of a great plague that was raging in Milan; and each church took it in turn to expose and pray before the Blessed Sacrament for forty hours, to implore God's mercy and forgiveness.

object for our devotion, but It is a source of internal strength to us. We know how our natural health and strength depend on food, and on a constant supply of it. The want of it for a single day is sufficient to make a man weak and unfit for his duties. Now the supernatural life and strength of our souls require nourishment and support like the natural life. And so our Lord gave us this Sacrament, under the form of our ordinary food, that we might understand that what food does for the body the Holy Eucharist does for the soul. It is not the only nourishment of the soul,<sup>7</sup> but It is the greatest and most indispensable. Our Lord's words are very strong: 'My Flesh is meat indeed.' 'Unless you eat of the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you.' 'This is the bread descending from heaven, that if any one eat of it he may not die.'<sup>8</sup>

**Obligation of Reception.**—The Apostles, to whom our Lord committed this Sacrament, well understood that It was given to be the chief means of supporting a Christian in leading a supernatural life, for they taught men to receive It very frequently. In the earliest times it was common to go to Communion daily.<sup>9</sup> The Church has always encouraged and enforced the practice of frequent Communion, and has from time to time made regulations on the subject. But as what is desired is not that people should go to Communion because they are forced to do so, but out of true devotion to this Holy Sacrament, and for the good which they receive from It, the only command of the Church which is of strict obligation is that which stands fourth among the Precepts of the Church, as given in the Catechism:

**Command of the Church.**—'To receive the Blessed

<sup>7</sup> 'Not by bread alone doth man live' (S. Matt. iv. 4).

<sup>8</sup> S. John vi.

<sup>9</sup> We see this in the Acts repeatedly.

Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter, or thereabouts.' That is to say, that if the reception of this Sacrament is neglected at other times, it must not be at this. The exact time during which it is obligatory to fulfil the 'Easter duties,' as they are called, is left to be settled by the Bishops in each country. In England the 'Easter time' begins on the first day of Lent, and ordinarily expires on Low Sunday, the first Sunday after Easter. During this time all Christians 'who have been instructed in this sacred mystery' must go to Communion.<sup>10</sup> And it is the duty of those who have the care of children to see that they are instructed and prepared as soon as they come to the age at which the first Communion is commonly made in the place where they are living.

**Dispositions.**—Instructions for the full understanding of the Sacrament, and how to receive It, are necessary before the first receiving the Blessed Eucharist, but a certain preparation is necessary whenever It is received. First, as regards the body, the Church, on account of the reverence due to so great a Sacrament, has ordained that ordinarily It should not be received except as the first food<sup>11</sup> that passes the lips that day. This is not a part of the institution of this Sacrament, as our Lord gave It to His Apostles after supper. It is only a rule of discipline made in later years by the Church, and which the Church, therefore, can, if she pleases, relax. At present she only relaxes it<sup>12</sup> in the case of those who are in danger of death, and who then receive the Holy Eucharist as

<sup>10</sup> Under pain of the lesser excommunication.

<sup>11</sup> Anything taken into the mouth by accident, or to clean it, and not as food, does not break this rule.

<sup>12</sup> The Pope grants a dispensation in some other cases, but very rarely, and only for some special reason.



viaticum or food to support them in their passage out of this life. To receive the Blessed Sacrament after any other food would therefore be a grievous sin, because it would break a strict command of the Church. But still more important is it that the person who receives the Blessed Eucharist should be in a state of grace, *i.e.* free from the stain of mortal sin. This is indispensable. It is commonly believed that our Lord washed His disciples' feet before giving them Communion, and this in order to show that 'cleansing themselves from all defilement of the flesh and spirit'<sup>13</sup> was an essential preparation for a good Communion. S. Paul speaks very strongly on this point: 'Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Body of the Lord.'<sup>14</sup> The meaning of receiving Communion unworthily is receiving It in a state in which we are unfit and incapable of receiving any benefit from It, and in which it offends God that we should come. No one can, of course, ever be worthy, *i.e.* deserving of so close a union with our Lord. The Holy Eucharist is not given to us because we are worthy, but to help us to become more so. But to present ourselves not merely in a state of weakness and imperfection, or of venial sin, but in a state of enmity to God and under His displeasure, because we have turned away from Him and wilfully broken His commands, is of the nature of an insult to Him. This is what is meant by an unworthy or sacrilegious Communion,—one received in mortal sin. And hence, though there is no actual law of the Church binding us to make a confes-

<sup>13</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1.<sup>14</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27.



sion before each Communion, yet it is the universal practice to do so, in order to make certain of being free from the guilt of mortal sin, as well as to cleanse the soul as far as possible from even venial sin. The only necessary disposition for receiving this Sacrament worthily is to be in a state of grace; but it is also usual and fitting that some preparation should be made according to each one's ability by prayer and meditation and good resolutions before Communion, as well as some devotions of thanksgiving after. For while none who receive Communion in a state of grace are excluded from profiting by the Sacrament, yet the amount of benefit they derive from It depends on the amount they make themselves capable of receiving. Those who prepare themselves carefully, and endeavour to receive It with humility and devotion, will derive more benefit than those who take no pains. The Church teaches us the dispositions that are most becoming, in the order for giving Communion. The *Confiteor*, or general confession, is to be said; and then the priest turns round and pronounces the general absolution, thus teaching us to receive as persons conscious of their sins and penitent for them, and therefore forgiven, but when forgiven, still not worthy of so close a union with Christ. This is taught us by the priest saying while he holds the sacred particle in his hands, 'Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest enter under my roof; but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed.'<sup>15</sup> Three times does he say these words, which pleased our Lord so much when they were said by the Centurion, to impress on those who are going to Communion the deep humility and sense of unworthiness which is the best disposition with which a sinner can come near his Lord and Saviour.

**Frequency of Communion.**—The frequency with which

<sup>15</sup> Taken from the Centurion's words to our Lord (S. Matt. viii. 8).

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this Sacrament ought to be received had best be regulated by the advice of the confessor. As a rule, every one would do well to go at least once a month. The effect of this Sacrament being like food, every one ought to receive It with frequency and regularity, as the chief means which is provided for nourishing and sustaining the soul, and not simply out of feelings of devotion. As those who are working hardest require most food, so those, whether very perfect or very imperfect, who are exerting themselves to overcome temptation and to make progress in the spiritual life, cannot easily go too frequently. Yet we have to be on our guard against considering frequency of Communion any proof of sanctity either in ourselves or other people, or regulating the number of Communions by what others do. What one person does either by advice of a confessor, or perhaps without advice, is no rule for another. We have to learn each one of us what is best in our own case.

## CHAPTER XLII.

### THE HOLY EUCHARIST AS A SACRIFICE.

INSTITUTION AS A SACRIFICE ; MEANING OF SACRIFICE ; KINDS OF SACRIFICE ; TYPICAL SACRIFICES ; SACRIFICE OF THE CROSS ; SACRIFICE OF THE MASS ; AND ITS ENDS ; OBLIGATION OF ASSISTING AT IT.

**Institution as a Sacrifice.**—When our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist, He referred to the three ways in which it was to benefit us. He said, ‘This is My Body,’ showing His *real presence amongst us* as the object of our love and devotion. In saying, ‘Take and eat,’ He showed that He gave it as a means of union with Himself, and as the *food of our souls*. And in saying, ‘My Body, which is given for you ; this is My Blood, which shall be shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins,’ He pointed to a third way in which it was to profit us,—as an offering made for us, *an atonement for our sins*. And so the Catechism says that this Sacrament is also a Sacrifice. We have therefore to consider (1) what is a sacrifice ; (2) the different kinds and examples of sacrifice ; (3) the efficacy of the sacrifices of the old law ; (4) the Sacrifice of our Lord on the Cross ; (5) how the Mass is a Sacrifice, and (6) our duty of assisting at its offering.

**Meaning of Sacrifice.**—Sacrifice means making a thing sacred—dedicating it to a holy purpose. Sacrifices are as early as man, for we read of their being made by the sons of Adam. When man desired to acknowledge God as the Giver of all good gifts, and to show gratitude for them, he could indeed thank and praise God with his words and

lift up his heart to Him. But what could he *do* to return thanks? what could he render to God for all the benefits that he had received?<sup>1</sup> How could he give anything to God? He could only do so by taking some of God's gifts, and dedicating them to God by setting them aside from his own use and benefit—destroying them or consuming them, so as to get no benefit or enjoyment from them himself, but giving them up in God's honour and in testimony of gratitude. And so the word 'sacrifice' comes to have a second meaning. It not only means making a thing an offering to God, but it means depriving ourselves of it. It is in this sense that we commonly speak of a person having made a great sacrifice. A sacrifice is to forego or give up something of our own in order to offer it to God.

**Kinds of Sacrifice**—Sacrifices made to God in this spirit were pleasing to Him, and He sanctioned them and showed in different ways that they were acceptable to Him. He was pleased with Abel's sacrifice; He accepted the sacrifice of gratitude that Noe offered as soon as he came forth from the Ark. He tried Abraham's faith by commanding him to offer up his only son Isaac in sacrifice. He instructed Moses to make the Israelites offer a lamb in sacrifice when the angel was to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians. Afterwards, when the Law was given, Moses, by direction of God, instituted certain sacrifices to be offered regularly in the Tabernacle, as well as some special sacrifices to be offered in atonement for sin. There were altogether four different kinds of sacrifice: (1) *The holocaust*, where the offering was always an animal slain and then burnt whole on the altar. It was offered as an act of adoration to God as the Sovereign

<sup>1</sup> 'What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me?' (Ps. cxv.)

Lord of all, to whom everything belonged. It was this sort of sacrifice that Abraham was commanded to make when God told him to sacrifice his son. (2) There was *the offering of thanksgiving*, which was not always a living creature. Noe offered this sacrifice after the Deluge, and Melchisedech offered bread and wine in thanksgiving for Abraham's victory over those who had carried away Lot. (3) There were *sin-offerings*, such as Job offered for the sins of his children, and David offered to appease the anger of God after he had numbered the people. The sacrifices offered in atonement for sin were almost always living victims,—sometimes they were wholly burnt offerings, but sometimes they were partly burnt and partly eaten, like the Paschal lamb. (4) Lastly, there were *peace-offerings*, which sometimes accompanied other sacrifices, and consisted of the whole or part of an animal, and of other things, like cakes or loaves, and flour and oil. These sacrifices were prescribed on festivals, and offered both in thanksgiving and to obtain blessings. The sacrifice offered by the Blessed Virgin on the feast of the Purification was of this kind.<sup>2</sup>

**Typical Sacrifices.**—But it is more important to understand the meaning of the old sacrifices, and how far they were able to do good to those who offered them. When in old times men offered the best of their flocks in sacrifice as an act of adoration to God and to show their gratitude, God accepted the offering, not because it was

<sup>2</sup> This is the most common account of the different sorts of sacrifices; but some think that the peace-offering was the same as that offered in thanksgiving, and the same sacrifice was certainly offered for more than one of these four ends. The only clear and certain division is that of bloody and unbloody sacrifices—*i.e.* those in which the victim was a living creature whose blood was shed, and those in which the offering was fruits of the earth, loaves, oil, and wine.

of any value in itself, but on account of the good dispositions of the offerer. But we see that God accepted some sacrifices in a special manner, sanctioned them, and even ordered them to be offered. He gave a value and meaning to them, as representations or figures of a great Sacrifice that was to come,—*the* sacrifice of our Lord on the Cross. He accepted Abel's sacrifice, because it was a sacrifice of blood offered for sin. When He commanded Abraham to offer his son on Mount Moriah, and he was taken to be offered, yet came back alive, this was a striking figure or type of God the Father giving up His only Son as a sacrifice for our sins, and yet raising Him to life again. These and other sacrifices approved or commanded by God had no power of themselves to please God or to atone for sin;<sup>3</sup> but because they were types of our Lord's sacrifice on the Cross, which could take away sin, God was pleased to give them a special value and power in helping to take away sin and to reconcile men to God. He forgave them for the sake of His Son, whose death was represented by the Sacrifice. In old times, when great criminals were afraid of vengeance, they took refuge at the foot of the Emperor's statue, and there they found safety, because out of reverence for what that statue represented no one would touch them. In the same way when the Paschal lamb was offered in Egypt, and its blood was sprinkled on the door-post of the Israelites' houses, the destroying Angel spared the house out of reverence for the Blood of the Lamb of God, which was represented by the blood of the Paschal lamb. Thus we see that the old sacrifices looked forward and led up to our Lord's sacrifice, and their chief value and efficacy came from this: that they were types and sha-

<sup>3</sup> 'For it is impossible that with the blood of oxen and goats sins should be taken away' (Heb. x. 4).

dows of the one great Sacrifice that really could of itself take away sin. When this sacrifice had been offered by our Lord's shedding His Blood in sacrifice on Mount Calvary, the old sacrifices ceased—they had no longer any value; men had now something far greater and higher in the Blood of our Lord.

**The Sacrifice of the Cross.**—The New Law, then, had not many sacrifices, but only one—the sacrifice of our Lord Himself, offered for our sins. In this sacrifice Christ was the Minister, making an offering to the Eternal Father of His own Body to be broken and His own Blood to be shed once for all to atone for the sins of all men. This was the first and principal object for which Christ came into the world,—to redeem us from the power of Satan, and to reconcile us to His Father by the sacrifice of His own life for our sake. And so when S. John the Baptist saw our Lord coming to be baptised, he pointed Him out to his disciples as the true Lamb without spot, who, by the sacrifice of Himself, was to take away the sins of the whole world.<sup>4</sup> Our Lord was the Victim whose Blood was shed on Mount Calvary, and He was the Minister who offered it; for though He suffered and was put to death by others, yet they would have had no power to touch Him unless He had willed it.<sup>5</sup>

**Nature of the Sacrifice of the Mass.**—Christ has offered one sacrifice of Blood for our sins on Mount Calvary.<sup>6</sup> But having died once, He dieth no more; but, as S. Paul says, He liveth for ever, seated at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us.<sup>7</sup> His Blood

<sup>4</sup> 'Behold the Lamb of God! Behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world!' (S. John i. 29.)

<sup>5</sup> 'He was offered because it was His own will' (Isai. liii. 7).

<sup>6</sup> 'But this man, offering one sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth on the right hand of God' (Heb. x. 12).

<sup>7</sup> Heb. vii. 25.



once shed continues to plead for mercy and forgiveness before the throne of God. But though the sufferings and death of Christ are over, the sacrifice is not. The sacrifice He made once for all is continued in the Mass. The Mass is a continual renewal of the offering of Christ's Body and Blood for our sins. His Body once broken and His Blood once shed never cease to be offered as an unbloody sacrifice on the altar. In the Mass there is a remembrance of our Lord's sufferings and death. As He said at its institution, 'Do this in remembrance of Me. As oft as you eat of this Bread and drink of this Chalice you show forth the Lord's death.' But Christ's sacrifice is not merely commemorated, but continued. For it is (1) His true Body and Blood which is on the altar, (2) offered up by the priest, who represents Christ;<sup>8</sup> and (3) it is offered up, as on Mount Calvary, to atone for our sins; Christ Himself, meantime, as the principal offerer, offering it and pleading for us in heaven. Hence, as having all the parts and characteristics of a sacrifice, the Council of Trent laid down, in opposition to those who denied that Christians had any sacrifice now, and said that the Holy Eucharist was only a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice, 'that in the Mass there is a real propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead.' As all the sacrifices of the Old Law derived their highest meaning and value from looking forward to the great Sacrifice of Calvary which they typified, so the Sacrifice of the Mass, offered ever since in all parts of the world, looks back to the Sacrifice of Calvary. It is a continued offering of that sacrifice, though it is only a commemoration, and not a continuance, of Christ's Passion.

**Ends of the Sacrifice of the Mass.**—The Sacrifice of

<sup>8</sup> In consecrating, the priest uses Christ's words, 'This is My Body;' and he consecrates by Christ's power.

the Mass<sup>9</sup> includes in itself the characteristics of all the different kinds of sacrifices of old times, each one of which represented the sacrifice of the New Law in some one or more points. It is like the holocaust, because our Lord gave Himself up wholly and entirely to suffer for us. It is a sacrifice offered in thanksgiving to God for all His benefits, but above all for our Lord's dying for us, which it commemorates. It is a sin-offering in being offered for the sins of all, and it is a peace-offering in its power of reconciling us to God, and obtaining all graces and blessings from Him for Christ's sake; and like a peace-offering, it is partaken of as food by the offerer. 'The Catechism speaks of the Mass as being offered for these four different ends. The Sacrifice of the Mass is therefore by far the greatest act of religious worship which we can pay to God. It can be offered to God alone, and it is an offering made to God of our substance, in the bread and wine and expenses of providing church and priest and ministers, but an offering which after consecration has a value so great as to be worthy of God Himself.

**Obligation of assisting at it.**—This act of supreme worship having been instituted by Christ Himself is not left by the Church to the devotion or discretion of her members. By the first precept of the Church they are bound under a strict obligation to be present and take part in it on Sundays and great Feasts—first, in order that they may remember to fulfil the duty of adoring God at least in this the highest act of adoration, and one specially enjoined by our Lord; and secondly, for their own sakes. For since our hope of salvation cannot be based on our own innocence, or our own good works, or on our having

<sup>9</sup> The word Mass is derived from the Latin word *Missa*, which is believed to mean sacrifice.

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done penance enough to satisfy God for our sins, but must depend on God's infinite mercy and on His forgiving us for the sake of Christ's love and sufferings for us, it is above all things important that we should frequently plead His merits and join in offering the sacrifice of which the end and object is to obtain pardon for sinners.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### ON THE SERVICE AND PARTS OF THE MASS.

HIGH AND LOW MASS; THE VESTMENTS; THE PRAYERS; THE CEREMONIES; ASSISTING AT MASS; PREPARATION OF THE PRIEST; OF THE PEOPLE; OF THE SACRIFICE; THE CANON; THE COMMUNION; THE THANKSGIVING.

BEFORE considering the different parts of the Mass, one or two things must be remarked which belong to the general understanding of it.

**High and Low Mass.**—Any one attending Mass will naturally observe the great difference between a High Mass and a Low Mass. These terms require a little explanation. The Holy Sacrifice, as it used to be offered at first, was not celebrated by a single priest, but he always had, where it was possible, many other assistants. Several of the ranks or orders of ministers who are ordained by the Sacrament of Holy Orders had the duty of assisting the Bishop or priest when offering Mass. Such were the deacon, sub-deacon, the lector, and acolyte. Besides those ministers who were actually assisting him, there was a *choir* or chorus of singers with him in the sanctuary, who were to sing different psalms, anthems, and responses during the Mass, either with the priest or in answer to him. This is still kept up in the old way when Mass is sung, as it often is on Sundays and festivals, with deacon and sub-deacon and other ministers, and with a choir of singers in the sanctuary or some other part of the church. When Mass is celebrated in this way it is called Solemn Mass or High Mass. But as it often happened that in lonely and poor places a choir

and so many ministers could not be had, and as the Church did not wish that people on that account should be left without a Mass, leave was given for the priest to have Mass with only one or two attendants, and to say those parts himself which the deacon and sub-deacon and the choir ought to take, when they can be had. These Masses, said without the solemnity of the High Mass, and without music, are called private or Low Masses. The essential parts of the Mass are just the same in both cases; but the singing and some of the ceremonies are left out in Low Mass—something like what is done in private Baptism given in danger of death, or when a priest cannot be had. But to understand the ceremonies and ritual of the Mass we must study what is done at a High Mass, as that represents the way the Church appointed it to be done, and still desires it to be done if possible.

**The Vestments.**—Every one can see the great difference between a High Mass and a Low Mass. Every one will also observe that whether it is a High or a Low Mass, there is a difference in the colour of the vestments worn by the priest on different days, and generally in the decorations of the altar. The reason of this is, that though the actual Sacrifice of the Mass is the same always, yet the day on which it is offered is often kept in honour of some great event or some great Saint. And so certain prayers and anthems and passages of Scripture, chiefly at the beginning of the Mass, are connected with what is being observed on that day. And even the external dress of the priest and of the altar changes with the feast. It sometimes—but not often—happens that there is no event or Saint whose feast comes on the day, then the vestments and decorations are green; but in Lent and Advent the green is changed for purple or vio-

let, which is the colour that used to be worn in times of penance. But on the day on which a Martyr's or Apostle's feast is kept, these vestments are changed to red, in honour of one who has shed his blood for the faith. If the feast is that of a Confessor for the faith, or a virgin, the colour is white, as representing purity and innocence of life. And vestments of the same colour, or of gold, are also to be used on the great festivals of our Lord and those of the Blessed Virgin.

**Prayers.**—The service or order of the Mass is difficult to follow and understand ; but every one will observe that the priest sometimes speaks in a low voice, so that he can scarcely be heard, and sometimes says things in a loud voice, or in a High Mass sings them. Those that are said out loud or sung are those that the ministers and people are to listen to or join in ; for they are to assist and take part in the sacrifice that he is going to offer for them. And in most cases the priest not only says them aloud, but turns to the people before he begins, to invite them and remind them to join. But a great part of the prayers is said in secret, because they are little aspirations or ejaculations, suitable to the different actions he is performing. They are for himself, and to preserve and increase the recollection and devotion which he ought to have in the performance of so great an action. There is no need to follow the priest in all these short prayers. Nor is it necessary to do so in the most solemn and mysterious part of the Mass, which is the actual offering of the sacrifice, and which the priest says entirely in secret. But it is a very good, and when once it has been learned, a very interesting, way of hearing Mass, to join in all the parts that are said aloud, as they are said aloud on purpose that the people may join in them, either by praying or singing.

**Ceremonies.**—There are a great many ceremonies in every Mass. In a High Mass some of these are carried out by those who assist the priest at the altar, and in a Low Mass these are omitted, or taken by the priest himself. It is not necessary for hearing Mass well that we should understand the meaning of each one of these ceremonies, nor is it necessary to follow them. It is sufficient to know that they are mostly practices enjoined by the Church from time to time, in order to insure every little thing concerning the great Sacrifice being carried on in the most orderly and reverential way possible. Nothing is to be done carelessly. So there is an exact and special way appointed for doing it. If the priest or the sacred ministers kneel, or bow down, or turn in particular directions, or wash their fingers or the sacred vessels, all is to enforce great reverence, and to remind them of what they are about. But it is well to understand the meaning of some of these ceremonies which are directed to the people, as when the bell is rung to call their attention to what is going on, and when the priest turns round and invites the people to join him in the prayer he is going to offer, saying, *Dominus vobiscum*,—‘The Lord be with you.’ This he does several times, making, at the same time, the sign of prayer by opening his hands and holding them up<sup>1</sup> in the way in which in old times people used to pray and in which the priest still prays at the Mass. It explains some of the ceremonies if we bear in mind that the priest is acting for our Lord, and represents Him at the Mass. He stands and others kneel. It is only before and after touching the Blessed Sacrament that he genuflects to it and then rises. This is the reason, also, why he is treated with such great reverence during

<sup>1</sup> ‘I will, therefore, that men pray in every place, lifting up pure hands’ (1 Tim. ii. 8).



the Mass. In a High Mass every one waits on him, and bows reverentially to him, and kisses his hand out of reverence, and incenses him first before every one else, whoever may be present. This incensing or burning incense is a figure of paying religious worship to any one. So we incense the Blessed Sacrament in Benediction and at the Consecration in the Mass. The priest is incensed as representing our Lord; the altar, because our Lord's Body is to be laid on it; the book that contains the Gospel, or the account of His words and actions; the bread and wine that are prepared for the Sacrifice; the ministers too, because they are engaged in waiting on Him; and lastly, the congregation who are present, who are called after His name, and who have come to honour and adore Him. All these, each in his order, and in the degree of nearness in which they approach to our Lord and His service, receive some tribute of religious honour, *i.e.* honour paid to God or for His sake.

**Assisting at Mass.**—The service of the Mass—that is, the ceremonies and prayers that are used when the Mass is offered—are of great antiquity. They were instituted in times when people's ways and ideas were very different from ours, and this makes some of them difficult to understand. In order to hear Mass well it is not necessary, indeed, to follow the priest in what he is saying, or to understand the meaning of everything he does. The Mass is not a prayer or a devotion in which we must join as we do in saying the Rosary, or going round the Way of the Cross. It is a great action which is being done, not by the priest and ourselves together, but by the priest alone, for us. The priest is assisted in this great action by the ministers or servers, who wait on him at the altar; but the way in which the people 'assist' at the Mass is by coming to the church in order to be present while some-

thing is done for them and for their benefit. They 'hear' Mass,—that is, they attend to what the priest does, and join in his intention; but they may say whatever prayers they know or like best.

But though this is sufficient to fulfil the obligation of hearing Mass, and in order to receiving the full benefit of it, yet it is interesting and useful to understand something of the different parts of the Mass. The Mass is the greatest act of adoration we can pay to God. And it greatly helps attention and devotion in hearing Mass to understand the meaning of its different ceremonies. To those who are able to do this it is one of the best ways of hearing Mass.

**Preparation of the Priest.**—The Mass is naturally divided into six parts, which can be observed by looking at what the priest does, and listening to his voice. After the chalice has been laid on the altar, and the places looked out in the Missal, or book of the Mass, the priest begins the Mass *by preparing himself*. He stands with the servers at the foot of the altar, and, after making the sign of the Cross, he has to recollect himself and think what he is going to do. *Introibo ad altare Dei*,—‘I will go up to the altar of God.’ He then recites with the servers the short psalm in which these words come. But as the best preparation for coming before God is humbling ourselves at the thought of our sins, and making confession of them, he next bows himself down and says the *Confiteor* to the servers, and they in turn to him, thus acknowledging that they, too, are sinners standing in need of the atonement of the sacrifice which they are going to offer. The priest, after this act of humiliation, raises himself up and presently ascends the steps of the altar, at which, though himself a sinner, he is nevertheless to represent our Lord, and to act for Him. It is because

in offering the sacrifice he represents our Lord, that when once he has gone up to the altar such profound reverence is shown to him. Even if a Bishop is present (or the Pope himself), yet the *celebrant*—that is, the priest who is celebrating the Mass—is put first, and treated by every one as the highest.

**Preparation of the People.**—The priest having said one or two little ejaculations as he goes up the steps to the altar, as a mark of reverence kisses it; he then goes to the book and begins the second part of the Mass, which consists in *preparing the people* for it. As this part of the Mass is especially for their instruction and edification, they should try to join in and follow it as far as they can. It consists of prayers and acts of devotion, which are easy to learn. After a verse or two said out of the Missal and called the *Introit*, the priest says alternately with the people, or servers, nine times :

1. *Kyrie eleison*, or ‘Lord, have mercy on us.’
2. The hymn of praise, *Gloria in excelsis*, or ‘Glory to God in the highest.’
3. One or more collects or prayers, which he says for the people, calling on them to join by turning and saying, *Dominus vobiscum*,—‘The Lord be with you.’
4. The Epistle, a passage taken from the Old Testament or the Epistles, giving some exhortation or instruction suitable to the feast of the day.
5. After some verses of a psalm said or sung, the Gospel (said at the other end of the altar). This consists, not of the words of a Prophet or Apostle, but of our Lord Himself; so all stand up to show their attention and readiness to listen to and set about doing what He commands.
6. After the Gospel on all the greater feasts the priest recites the profession of faith, called the Nicene

Creed. This part of the Mass being intended for the people who assist, many of the prayer-books contain the Collects, Epistles, and Gospels for the year, that the people may study them ; and on Sundays it is usual to read the Epistle and Gospel in the language of the country, and generally to preach on it. But the *Kyrie eleison*, the *Gloria in excelsis*, and the Nicene Creed, being always the same, may easily be learned by heart.

**Preparation of the Sacrifice.**—The people being in this way exhorted and instructed, and having joined with the priest in prayer and acts of faith and praise, the priest enters on the third part of the Mass, the *preparation of the sacrifice*. This is also called the *Offertory*, and is an essential part of the Mass. For sacrifice, it must be remembered, consisted from the earliest times in setting aside something of our goods from our own use, and dedicating them to the service of God. In the times of the Patriarchs and the Jews, men took wine and cakes of flour, and the first-fruits of the harvest and the best of their flocks, and made, each one, his offering in the house of God. And when these old sacrifices were changed for the one great Sacrifice of the New Law, the Christians still kept up the practice of bringing their offerings of bread and wine, and laying them at the foot of the altar.<sup>2</sup> The deacons and acolytes used to receive them and lay them on the credence-table at the side of the altar ; and they used to be divided, and given part to the Bishop, part for the support of the priest and ministers of the Church, and part for the poor. So the practice of making a collection at this part of the Mass is not a new thing ; it is a part of the old service of offering sacrifice, which was made out of what the people

<sup>2</sup> 'On the first day of the week let every one of you put apart with himself, laying up what it shall please him' (1 Cor. xvi. 2).

brought as an offering to God.<sup>3</sup> They joined in the sacrifice by their offerings as well as their prayers. These offerings are now made in money; but in ancient times the deacons used to take from the bread and wine offered by the people as much as was wanted for the sacrifice; and you may still see them at this part of the Mass bring the bread and wine from the credence-table. The priest offers first the oblation of bread, and then of the wine, with some short prayers. Next, if it is a High Mass, he incenses the offering and the crucifix and the whole altar; and he is incensed himself; and then washes his hands at the corner of the altar, that he may be ready to touch the Holy Sacrifice. Then he turns to the people and says, *Orate fratres*,—‘Pray, brethren,’—to ask the people to join with him in the sacrifice he is now going to offer. Lastly, he says some prayers in silence, and so these are called the *secret* prayers. But he ends these by singing or saying the last words of them, *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum*, out loud. This was probably done for the same reason as we now ring the bell, to call the attention of the people who are not near enough to hear and see what the priest does, that they may know that the most solemn part of the Mass, in which the sacrifice is actually offered, is now commencing. Indeed the solemn prayer or address to God that the priest says or sings is called the *Preface*, as coming at the commencement of the principal part of the Mass. The last words of the Preface, called the *Sanctus*, are said in a low tone by the priest, but are sung by the choir.

**The Canon.**—The fourth part of the Mass is what is called the *Canon*. It means the rule or form according to which the sacrifice must be offered. It is not

<sup>3</sup> ‘No one shall appear with his hands empty before the Lord’ (Deut. xvi. 16).

like other parts of the Mass, which change with the day. This part scarcely changes at all, and every word of it is to be said with the greatest care. It is also all said in secret by the priest, except a few words at the end, which refer to those who are present. The prayers said by the priest are very ancient, and some of them difficult to understand. It is not necessary for the people to follow them. There are, first, two or three prayers, and among them one in particular for those for whom the priest especially desires to pray. Then comes the *Consecration*, first of the bread and then of the wine. In this consecration the priest uses the words of Christ Himself, in whose place he stands. For when he says, 'This is My Body, this is My Blood,' it is by the power of God that the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. The priest is our Lord's vicar or minister, acting for Him and by His command. It is at this time that the bell is rung again several times, that the people may keep silence and bow down, as they see the priest does, when he elevates or lifts up the Blessed Sacrament and shows it to the people after each consecration. Then follow two or three more secret prayers, one of which is to pray for the souls of the faithful departed, and another, the last one, is for the priest himself and the others who are offering the sacrifice with him. And to call their attention to this, the priest says, in a low voice, the first words of it, *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, just so that he can be heard. The last thing he does in this part of the Mass is to take up the Sacred Host, and after making some signs of the Cross, raise or elevate it for the second time, not now to show it to the people, but as offering it up to God ;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> This is sometimes called the little elevation, because the priest does not raise the Host and chalice so high as when he lifts it up to show it to the people.



and he ends the secret words which he says while doing this with the words, *Per omnia sæcula sæculorum*, which, as before, he says out loud to call the attention of the people to the conclusion of this part of the Mass, which, though it is the chief and most important, is very short, only taking up a few minutes.

**The Communion.**—Whenever anything was offered to God in sacrifice, the thing sacrificed was always in some way consumed, either by fire, or by being poured out on the ground, or being eaten in thanksgiving to God for His gift. So in the Sacrifice of the Mass the victim is *consumed* in this last way, by being received as food by those who offer and assist at the Holy Sacrifice. The fifth part of the Mass, therefore, is called the *Communion*, and sometimes the *Consummation* of the Sacrifice. The Blessed Sacrament having been offered to God for our sins, is now given to us as the food of our souls. Hence in this part of the Mass the people again take part. The priest begins (1) by the ‘Our Father’ as a preparation for Communion. For what prayer can be so good as the words our Lord Himself taught us said devoutly and in His presence? Then (2) there comes an act of contrition and humiliation in the *Agnus Dei*, which the priest says out loud three times, striking his breast, ‘Lamb of God, who takest away’ (by this sacrifice) ‘the sins of the world, have mercy on us.’ Then there is a third act of preparation for people and priest alike, which is called the *Pax*, or Kiss of Peace. For our Lord taught that we could never please Him unless we were in union with one another; and so, in the earliest times, Christians used to embrace each other in order to assist and prove their goodwill and love to one another before receiving the Blessed Sacrament. They were taught to show that they were in communion with each other before they ventured to



enter into the more awful and Holy Communion with God. The priest then, after a prayer for peace and union, gives the embrace of peace to the deacon, and he to the rest, each one embracing the other as a sign of good-will and charity. Then the priest says one or two secret prayers by way of preparation, and finishes by taking the Blessed Sacrament up in his hands and saying three times, *Domine non sum dignus*, as an act of profound humility and abasement before receiving our Lord into his breast. After receiving the Precious Blood in the chalice, he next gives Communion to the people. The acolytes say the *Confiteor* for the people, and the priest turns round and pronounces a general absolution over them, and gives them the Blessed Sacrament with the same form and words with which he received it himself, and this concludes the Consummation of the Sacrifice.

**The Thanksgiving.**—There remains one more part of the Mass—the conclusion, or Thanksgiving. After the Communion is over, the priest reverently cleanses the sacred vessels from any particles that may have adhered to them, and they are then put up. He next says one or two prayers of thanksgiving secretly, and one or two collects aloud; and then turning to the people, he, or the deacon, says, *Ite Missa est*, which means, ‘Depart, the Sacrifice is finished;’ and lastly, after one more little secret prayer, he turns round and blesses the people. The Mass is now concluded, though the priest before he leaves the altar recites at the Gospel side the beginning of the Gospel of S. John as an act of faith and thanksgiving. Besides this, he has some other psalms and prayers to say after he has left the altar, to praise and thank God for the gift of the Holy Sacrifice.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

EXPLANATION OF NAME ; INSTITUTION ; MINISTER ; OUTWARD SIGN ; CONTRITION ; TWO KINDS OF IT ; ATTRITION ; CONFESSION—REASON OF IT ; AND MEANING OF IT ; SATISFACTION ; INDULGENCE ; PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION ; EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE ; ACT OF CONTRITION ; METHOD OF CONFESSING ; OBLIGATION OF CONFESSING.

**Explanation of the Name.**—The first three Sacraments—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Eucharist—are the three Sacraments that were instituted by our Lord to put us into the way of salvation, and to keep us in it; to give us a supernatural life, and help us to maintain it. But suppose a man does not keep in the way of salvation, nor go on living a supernatural life, but falls away and commits grievous sin? In that case he loses all he got in Baptism and Confirmation; he cannot receive those Sacraments again, nor can he go to Communion in the state he is in. In former times, if the sin a person committed was publicly known, he was publicly excluded from going to Communion and from the communion of Saints, or *excommunicated*, as it was called; and so he remained until he repented of his sin. If he repented he had to prove the reality of his sorrow by making satisfaction for his sin by doing the penance laid on him. There were in the early times of the Church a fixed set of penances for particular sins. They were called the Canonical Penances. They were very severe. A person who had committed a single great sin, and was sorry for it, might yet have to fulfil a penance of some

years before he was received back into the communion of the faithful. The penitents could not come inside the church, but remained in the porch, and used to ask the prayers of those who passed in, and especially of those who had great merit, through having suffered for the true faith. In cases where the penitents showed great contrition for their sins their time of penance was shortened, for the sake of those who interceded for them ; and this relaxation of the penance was called an Indulgence. It did not mean being indulgent to sinners and sins, but being indulgent to penitents who were heartily sorry for their sins. But whether their penance was shortened or not, when they were forgiven and restored to their place as Christians, it was by the Sacrament of Penance, so called because it was given to those who were doing penance for their sins ; though it is also called Confession, because acknowledging and confessing our sins is the first thing to be done in order to receive it. It is the forgiveness of sins, granted to those who have sinned after they have been baptised, but who are sorry for their sins and confess them, and who are willing to do penance for them, or, at least, make satisfaction for them by doing penance.

**Institution.**—Our Lord knew that there would be many who, after being made the children of God by Baptism, would fall away from Him by sin. And in His love for us, and compassion for our weakness, He instituted this Sacrament, for the purpose of reconciling such sinners to God. Before His Passion He told S. Peter, as head of His Church, that He would give him this power. ‘I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.’<sup>1</sup> But after

<sup>1</sup> S. Matt. xvi. 18.

His Resurrection, when the Apostles had been ordained as priests, He conferred this power on them all, saying, 'As the Father sent Me, I also send you.' Then He breathed on them, and said, 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins ye retain, they are retained.'<sup>2</sup>

**Minister.**—This was a wonderful power to confer on man; but that our Lord meant to confer it is certain, not only from the teaching of the Church and from the plain meaning of our Lord's words, but also because He had prepared them for this doctrine beforehand, as He had in the case of the Holy Eucharist. For on one occasion we read that a man sick of the palsy was brought to Him, and He said to him, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.' The Scribes and Pharisees who were present took offence at this, thinking that it was a blasphemy; 'for who,' they said, 'can forgive sins but God alone?'<sup>3</sup> Upon which our Lord taught them that the Son of Man had power on earth to forgive sins; and as a proof of it, He told the paralytic to rise and take up his bed and go to his house. And he arose and went to his house. As sin is an offence against God, the Scribes were right in saying that God alone could forgive it; but our Lord taught them that He, the Son of Man, had brought this power from heaven; and He showed that He gave this same power to His Apostles, when He said, 'As the Father sent Me, so send I you.' To forgive sins is a Divine power, which our Lord possessed as Son of God, sent by His Father into the world; and when He was leaving the world He left this same power to others to exercise in His Name. Just as in this country the Sovereign alone has power of life and death; yet if any one is accused of a crime he is not tried by the Sovereign

<sup>2</sup> S. John xx. 21.

<sup>3</sup> S. Luke v. 21.

himself, but by his ministers, acting in his name and under his authority; and they examine and pronounce judgment, and carry it into execution. So our Lord, though He alone has power to forgive and retain sins, intrusted this power to His ministers, and they judge of the sins, and forgive or retain them in His Name and by the power He has given them. It was to the Apostles that He first gave this power, with authority to communicate it to others who should succeed them. And thus Bishops and priests are the ministers of this Sacrament by Christ's appointment. But we must observe that they cannot exercise this power over any persons, and as they please; they are only to do so when *sent* by the rulers of the Church, and commissioned to take charge of some particular portion of Christ's fold, and acting by the instructions given them. A priest, therefore, however good or holy he may be, cannot hear confessions and give absolution unless he has jurisdiction,—that is to say, unless the Bishop has intrusted some work to him. Otherwise, though he has the power in him, so to speak, he cannot use it. Just as a judge, though he is a true and lawful judge, cannot try any person he likes, but only those whom he is sent to try. It is with the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ on earth and the successor of S. Peter, that the full power rests of sending out the ministers of God, and authorising them 'to bind and loose,' to forgive and retain sins for Him. It was to him that Christ said, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' It was to him that our Lord delivered the keys of His kingdom; and when others exercise this power, by forgiving sins or remitting punishment, it is by his authorisation. Our Lord taught S. Peter in what spirit he should exercise this great power.

For when on one occasion S. Peter asked how many times his brother should offend against him and he should forgive him, to seven times? our Lord answered him, 'I say not unto seven times, but unto seventy times seven.'<sup>4</sup> And He went on to give him the parable of the Unmerciful Servant, to show His meaning more fully.

**Outward Sign.**—The outward sign of the Sacrament of Penance is the *absolution* pronounced by the priest, together with the acts of the penitent, *i.e.* his contrition, confession, and satisfaction. For these must go together. If absolution were given without these it would be without effect. The sins of the penitent are forgiven by absolution, *together with* contrition, confession, and satisfaction. Receiving this Sacrament depends on what the penitent does as much as on what the priest does, and the penitent has to take more care in this than any other Sacrament to prepare himself well. He must have these three dispositions, since if he failed in any one of them he would commit a sin and, it might be, a sacrilege. He has therefore to take pains about these acts, and make sure that he does them rightly and truly. For though God is willing to forgive sins, even grievous ones, repeatedly, yet not without his really turning back to God; and he will not be forgiven if he will not take the trouble to do this. For sometimes it costs not a little pain, shame, and sacrifice. Yet these are necessary. Let us consider the nature of each act.

**Contrition.**—The most indispensable of these is contrition. For sins may be forgiven under some circumstances without confession and satisfaction, but they are never forgiven without contrition. This is only what we should expect from the nature of sin. Sin is offending God. The sinful thing that is done offends Him, be-

<sup>4</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 21.

cause it proceeds from, and indicates a want of care for and love of, God. When a sin has once been committed it cannot possibly be undone; but the sinner's dispositions may be so changed that he is sorry for what he has done, and would undo it if he could. The meaning of repentance is change of mind and disposition. God, in His mercy, is willing to forgive sin when there is repentance; but how can He forgive it when the same dispositions that caused Him to be offended still remain unchanged? Repentance, therefore, or a true real sorrow is, under all circumstances, necessary for any sin to be forgiven. Even if the sorrow is a weak one, and small in amount, yet it must be a real and hearty sorrow. But there are different sorts of sorrow. Is any sort sufficient? Yes, for receiving forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance any sort of sorrow that is a sorrow *for offending God*. For there is a sorrow that is a mere natural sorrow, and has nothing to do with God. A man may be sorry for having committed a sin, because it has been the cause of an accident to him, or of his losing his money, or of his getting into trouble or disgrace. And he may be truly sorry for his sinful act, not because it has done an injury to God, but because it has injured himself. This is a mere natural sorrow that a person might have who did not care for, or even believe in, God. The sorrow that we must have is a sorrow because we have offended God, which is therefore a supernatural sorrow. This is the sort of sorrow which the Catechism calls contrition—a true sorrow proceeding from the heart, and that on account of having offended God.

**Two Kinds of it.**—Of this contrition there are not only different degrees, just as there are different degrees of heat, but there are two different kinds; as the heat



caused by a fire is a different heat from that caused by the sun, in having a different source. A person may be sorry for offending God (1) because he loves or (2) because he fears Him. The first of these two kinds is always called contrition, or perfect contrition. It is much the highest and best sort of sorrow. It will forgive sin of itself. And the reason is clear. For sin is turning away from loving God to something else, and this makes us lose His love. But contrition is being sorry because we love Him. But we cannot love Him and be separated from Him, or excluded from His love.<sup>5</sup> The fact, then, of our loving God restores us to His favour; and contrition—*i.e.* a perfect contrition—includes the love of God and proceeds from it. So that it will at once forgive sin when we cannot get to the Sacrament of Penance, and it will forgive without waiting for our receiving that Sacrament, though, by Divine command, every one who has fallen into mortal sin is bound to receive it if he can.

**Attrition.**—If this contrition, *i.e.* sorrow for offending God because we love Him, will remit sin, why has our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Penance for the forgiveness of sins? First, because people, especially those who fall into grievous sins, may easily make a mistake and think that they have this contrition for the love of God, when, in fact, they have not got it. And this is more likely, because those who really love God scarcely ever fall into mortal sin. How can they? for mortal sin is not loving God, but loving something else better, at all events for the moment. And secondly, being sorry for the love of God is only an easy thing to those who really do habitually love Him; to others it is very difficult. It is like other things. If we have learned to do them, and acquired a habit of doing them, we can make

<sup>5</sup> 1 S. John iv. 7.

any particular act of them readily and at once, just as a person can speak French or play the piano if he has learned to do so. But we should think a man was mad who thought he could at any moment play an instrument or speak a language he had not learned. It is the same sort of absurdity for a person to think that he could go on pleasing himself without thinking of God and learning to love Him, and then make an act of perfect contrition at any moment he pleased. At least it would be extremely difficult, and absolutely impossible without the help of the Holy Spirit. It is because of this difficulty, and to help sinners who have not got contrition, but only the less perfect sort of sorrow that comes from the fear of God, that our Lord has instituted the Sacrament of Penance. This imperfect contrition, which is sometimes called attrition, is much easier to have; or it would be truer to say that every one who believes in God has, at least, some of it,—even selfish and self-indulgent people. For mortal sin does not cast out the fear of God, though it does cast out the love of God. A sinner, therefore, even a great sinner, can make an act of sorrow for the fear of God when he cannot make one for the love of God; for the love of God is not in him.<sup>6</sup> And with this act of imperfect sorrow he can obtain the pardon of his sins through the Sacrament of Penance, and so be restored to God's favour and love. Imperfect contrition, or attrition, then, is a sorrow for sin through the fear of God and His judgments, the dread of the loss of heaven and of the pains of hell.

**Confession: Reason of it.**—But this imperfect contrition, or attrition, will not of itself remit sin; it must be accompanied by confession, and something also in the way of satisfaction. Confession of the sins is a con-

<sup>6</sup> 1 S. John ii. 15.

dition of obtaining absolution in the Sacrament of Penance. This has been the teaching and practice of the Church from the earliest times ; for it is plain that the ministers of this Sacrament could not exercise the power of forgiving or retaining sins without knowing what the sins are. The end of the Sacrament of Penance is not merely to forgive sin, but to cure it,—to raise the sinner out of sinful ways. And confession is of the greatest use to this end, inasmuch as the knowledge that he must confess (1) tends to deter him from committing sin, (2) helps to humble him for his sins, and so assists his sorrow, and (3) enables the priest to exhort and advise him as to the best remedies for his sin, and the easiest ways of avoiding it ; for as a man who is sick must disclose his malady to the doctor, who uses his knowledge, not to upbraid or expose him, but to help him to get better, so our Lord has instituted this Sacrament as a means of curing the soul that is sick ; and the minister of the Sacrament, who is one tempted like himself, and liable to fall, does not want to upbraid or reproach the penitent, but to help him out of his sinful state and to suggest remedies for temptations. Nor can the priest ever disclose things that he has heard in confession ; for lest people should be afraid of coming to this Sacrament from fear of their sins being known, the Church made long ago a strict regulation that, when sins were not public, they should be confessed privately, and under a seal of secrecy ; so that if a person's sin is not known in other ways it can never be known by its being told in confession.

**Confession : Practice of it.**—What is meant by confessing our sins ? This does not need much explanation. It means to tell the priest what we have done, truly and sincerely, as well as we know it ourselves ; to keep

nothing back that we can recollect. So the Catechism says confession is to accuse ourselves of all our sins to a priest. Observe the words, to *accuse*, not to *excuse*; and to accuse ourselves, not other people, nor to lay things to their fault;<sup>7</sup> and to tell our sins; not our good deeds, nor our feelings, nor our wants, nor our miseries and troubles, but our sins; and the more shortly and simply we do this the better the confession is. The only case in which we ought to make explanations is when there is some circumstance that quite alters the nature of the sin, so that the priest would not understand what the sin really was, unless we told him the explanation. Anything that, as we say, makes a great difference in the sin must be told, whether it makes the sin greater or less. If a boy struck a person, and that person was his father, he must say so; for it is a much greater sin to strike a parent than another person. If he struck another boy who attacked him he must explain this, as it makes the sin much less if he was attacked first by another, and did not begin a quarrel. To tell a lie is always a sin; but it makes a great difference whether a person told a lie to excuse another person, and save him from being punished, or whether he told it to get another person into trouble because he did not like him. We have not only to confess the kind of sin we have committed, but the number of sins as far as we can recollect. It might happen that a person has been a long time away from confession, and cannot recollect how often he has committed some particular kind of sin; but he can generally tell about how often, whether it was every day or every week or every year.

Venial sins do not deprive us of God's grace. We

<sup>7</sup> We should always avoid as far as possible mentioning the names of other people in our confession.

are not obliged to confess them. It is a good thing to do so, because it helps us to be sorry for them, and if *we are sorry for them* we can obtain forgiveness for them through the Sacrament of Penance ; but we can also obtain forgiveness for them in other ways. And if we are doubtful whether a sin is not mortal, we should confess it, for fear of making a mistake. For all mortal sins must be confessed, or the confession is a bad one. If we try to recollect them and intend to confess them all, but have forgotten some, this will not spoil the confession, because we have a sincere intention of confessing them. But it is quite a different thing if a person keeps back some sin through shame or fear. That is a sacrilegious confession. It is of no use to make a sacrilegious confession. The only confession that will do for obtaining absolution is a complete confession. It is much better not to confess at all, than wilfully to leave out a sin. If a person is timid or ashamed to confess, at least he should tell the priest not to give him absolution at present, for that he has not finished his confession. Most probably the priest will be able to help him, or he can come again.

**Satisfaction.**—The third condition for receiving absolution is satisfaction. Making or giving satisfaction means repairing an injury, or making up for it in some way, so as to satisfy the person injured. Thus, if we do an injury to our neighbour by word or deed, we are bound to repair the injury or make some satisfaction. But here, satisfaction does not mean making reparation to man, but to God. It has been shown that in early times those who had committed grievous sins were obliged to submit to very severe penances in satisfaction for their sins, and to fulfil these before they received full absolution. The Church has relaxed the severity of these penances, and leaves it now to the discretion of each confessor to

impose whatever penance he thinks fit on the penitent. It is seldom anything difficult, but it must be strictly fulfilled. Accepting this little penance is a condition of absolution, because it is an acknowledgment of the duty of making satisfaction to God for our sins. This little penance, given in confession, is seldom enough of itself to make full satisfaction for the sin, but the rest is left to the penitent to make when he will. If he does not do this in this life, he will have to suffer it in Purgatory. For it is seldom taken away by absolution. The Sacrament of Penance takes away the guilt and stain of sin, and the soul, being restored to the grace of God, could never, so long as it remains in that state, be cast out from His Presence and condemned to hell. But as children may be punished by their father in his love to them, and for their amendment, so God may give fatherly correction to His children; leaving them to suffer the natural consequences of their sins, or to fall under special trials. And if they are not made better by these, and do not receive them as from God in a spirit of contrition and humility, what remains but that they should be purified by still heavier pains in Purgatory, making there that satisfaction for their sins which they had not the courage to make during their lifetime? The Sacrament of Penance is so called because it is a Sacrament which remits sin, not without, but by means of, penance. When once men have committed sin after Baptism, there is no way of escaping suffering and punishment for it. They must either lay that punishment on themselves in a contrite spirit, or accept in that spirit the afflictions and sufferings sent them in this life, or in default they must pay in Purgatory that which they would not pay on earth.

**Indulgences.**—Is there, then, no means by which this temporal punishment can be escaped? None by which it



can be altogether escaped. Those escape it most who have the most contrition; but the more contrition a person has, the more ready he is to satisfy God for his sins by works of penance. But as in old times the penitents, who showed great sorrow, and took the penances laid on them with willingness and humility, often obtained a remission of part of their punishment, called an indulgence, so those who now are most willing to make satisfaction for sin by penance and good works, and are most humble under suffering, obtain the greatest release from it. The Church still grants indulgences, releasing those who do certain good works in good dispositions from a part or the whole<sup>8</sup> of the penance they would have had to do according to the old Canons, and remitting therefore an equal amount of the punishment which the penitent would have to suffer in Purgatory. For as people may have to suffer in Purgatory instead of doing the Church's penance, so if they were let off the Church's penance they may be let off the suffering in Purgatory. But as regards the souls in Purgatory, the Church does not let them off absolutely, as she does the living members of the Church, but only so far as God, 'in whose hands are the souls of the just,'<sup>9</sup> sees that they are sufficiently purified from sin, and fit for such a remission. So far, then, as an indulgence is a remission of suffering in *Purgatory*, it is only by way of suffrage, *i.e.* the Church's supplication and intercession in their behalf. Our own prayers and good desires and acts of mortification, done in a spirit of penance, will make satisfaction for our sin; and the more of these we do ourselves, the less we shall have to suffer in Purgatory. But the good works that are recommended by the Church, and blessed by her to our profit, if done in the same spirit of penance, will, through

<sup>8</sup> Called a Plenary Indulgence.

<sup>9</sup> Wisdom iii. 1.



her intercession and the power granted to her by Christ, do much more for us in that way than our own good works.

**Preparation.**—When a person goes to receive the Sacrament of Penance, he does so in order to get absolution or forgiveness of his sins by the priest; but the priest cannot give him absolution except on the three conditions of confession, contrition, and satisfaction. The preparation for confession, therefore, is to make ourselves ready to confess our sins, and to see that we are really sorry for them, and ready to make whatever reparation and satisfaction is laid on us. The preparation is short and easy for those who often go to confession, and are always trying to lead a good life; but those who have never been to confession before or not for a long time, and those who have been living a careless or a bad life, have to take a good deal more pains, and give up a good deal more time to prepare themselves. There are different prayers and ways of preparing for confession given in prayer-books. We may take any of them that we like. But whatever way we take, the preparation consists—first, of asking the help of God's grace to prepare well, by some prayer or invocation of the Holy Spirit; and the more difficult we find it to make our confession, the more earnestly we ought to pray for this help.

**Examination of Conscience.**—Secondly, as the penitent has to confess his sins, he must think beforehand of what he has to confess; and the longer he has been away, the greater pains must he take to recollect what he has done. Sin means doing something that we know to be wrong; our conscience tells us at the time that it is contrary to God's laws, and that it will offend Him. What are the things which God knows that we have done? What are the things we have said or done contrary to what our

conscience told us? These are the things that we have to confess, so we must examine our conscience, and try to recollect the different times and different ways in which we disobeyed our conscience. What our conscience did was to remind us of the Commandments of God and of His Church. A very common way, therefore, of examining our conscience is to go over the Commandments one by one, and see if our conscience reminds us that we broke them, and in what way and how often, and whether we have disobeyed the rules of the Church, and neglected the duties laid on us by our superiors. There are some Commandments that each of us keeps strictly—we have got into the way of keeping them; other people keep them, and we do the same as they do, and the devil does not tempt us to break them. If we ever broke them, we were generally shocked at ourselves, and so we recollect these sins easily. But there are other Commandments about which we are not so strict; other people do not keep them strictly, and we have been like other people. It is very easy to miss these sins and forget them, though they are the sins that we have done most frequently, and are our greatest sins. The chief thing in examining our conscience is not to miss any of them; for we have to find out, not what would disgrace us in the eyes of other people, but what we have done that has displeased God. And though we may not think much of a sin because we have got accustomed to committing it, yet God does not get accustomed to our sins; so that, if we wish that He should forgive us, we must examine ourselves very carefully on the sins to which we are most inclined, and which we commit oftenest, and about which our parents, or teachers, or superiors, or our confessor, have oftenest spoken to us. In examining our conscience we have to try, above all things, to find out our greatest sin in God's

sight, and to be ready to tell all about that. If we can recollect any grievous sins, we must think how often, or about how often, we have done them. If a person really *tries* to find out his sins, that is enough; he need not be anxious, because, if he forgets any, they will be forgiven all the same.

**Act of Contrition.**—Having examined his conscience, the next thing the penitent has to do is to make an act of contrition. This does not mean that he is to say over the prayer called an Act of Contrition; that is not enough. An act of contrition means declaring to Almighty God that you are sorry because you really are sorry. So you must find out whether you are sorry, not for some sins only, but for all the sins by which you have wilfully offended Him. And it is necessary to have the sort of sorrow which is called contrition, *i.e.* a sorrow for offending God. If you are sure that you are sorry for your sins—perhaps that is the reason why you have come to confession—that is enough; for when you say the act of contrition, you will say it because you think and mean 'it. But if a person is not sure that he is really sorry, what is he to do? The Catechism says he 'must take time and care and pains to make a good act of contrition.' He can say some particular prayers for this purpose, asking earnestly of God to give him a true sorrow. Then he can 'make use of such considerations as will lead him to it,'—that by his sin he has offended God, who loves him as a father, who has made and preserved him, and who has destined him to enjoy everlasting happiness in heaven; and especially God the Son, who has died on the Cross to save him from the punishment he deserves for his sins. If he is so ungrateful as to have no love or regard for God, nor sorrow for offending Him, he must think of God as his Master, his Sovereign Lord, and his

future Judge, who hates sin and wickedness, and that it will be a fearful thing to fall into His hands, since He has power to cast both body and soul into hell. He must pray to God again to pierce his heart with fear. If he does this, and takes time and pains about it, he may then be able to get absolution; for a person who really wishes to be sorry, and prays earnestly to be sorry, and tries hard to be sorry, *is* sorry, even though he sheds no tears, nor is sensible of any strong feelings of contrition. If he is still doubtful, let him ask himself what he means to do in the time to come; whether he is determined not to offend God again. For if he is resolved to renounce his sins, and to avoid the occasions of them, and to pray and go to the Sacraments in order to overcome his temptations, this is a very good sign of his sorrow being a true one. The Sacrament of Penance has been given for the very purpose of forgiving and helping those whose sorrow is imperfect, but who are turning back to God and trying their best to be sorry.

**Method of Confessing** —The preparation for confession, then, consists in examining our conscience, and making a true act of contrition. After preparing, the penitent takes his turn (not another person's) to go into the confessional, and kneels there till the priest is ready to hear him. He begins by asking a blessing, in order to his making a good confession, saying, 'Pray, father'—this is how the priest is always to be addressed in confession—'give me your blessing.' The priest answers, 'May God be with you in your heart and lips, so that you may truly and humbly confess your sins, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.' The penitent then says the *Confiteor*, down to the part where he strikes his breast, putting in the words, 'And to you, father,' after 'all the Saints.' He begins his confession by saying how

long a time it is since his last confession. And if through any cause he did not then receive absolution, he must take care to mention this. He then declares his sins just loud enough for the priest to be able to hear distinctly what he says. He should not hurry himself, but yet should not be longer than he can well help ; but he should, if possible, be so well prepared as to be able to say what he has done straight off, without stopping to think between the sins. The best confession is that which is the shortest and simplest, like a child's to its mother. 'Mother, I have done this or that.' As soon as he has come to the end of his sins, he should at once go on to say the usual conclusion : 'For these sins, and for all those which I cannot now recollect, I am heartily sorry, I promise amendment for the future, and I humbly ask pardon of God, and penance and absolution from you, my spiritual father.' And the second part of the *Confiteor* may be added. The penitent, having finished, should now be silent, and listen to what the priest says, not interrupting him, except to answer a question. He should receive, with great attention and reverence, the advice or spiritual direction he gives him, and accept willingly the penance he lays on him, in satisfaction for his sins ; and finally, while the priest pronounces over him the prayers for his forgiveness, and the actual words of absolution, 'I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' he should once more make, with his heart and lips, a fervent act of contrition before the crucifix. For the contrition of the penitent must come before or accompany the absolution of the priest. When the priest has finished, the penitent leaves the confessional, and should, if possible, not leave the church without returning thanks to God for the forgiveness of his sins and the grace that

he has received. If the penance consists of prayers, it would be a good thing to say them at once.

**Obligation of Confession.**—The third precept of the Church makes it a matter of strict obligation to confess our sins at least once a year. But we are also bound to receive this Sacrament when in danger of death ; and it is our duty, in taking care of our souls, to receive it as soon as possible in case of falling into grievous sin, and as a preparation for receiving other Sacraments worthily. As soon as children have come to the use of reason, so as to be capable of committing grievous sin, they are also capable of being instructed in the Sacrament by which alone they can obtain forgiveness, and they are then under the obligation to receive it.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### EXTREME UNCTION.

MEANING OF THE NAME ; INSTITUTION ; OUTWARD SIGN ;  
INWARD GRACE ; DISPOSITIONS.

**Meaning of the Name.**—Holy oil is used in the administration of several of the Sacraments : in Baptism, unless it is given privately ; in Confirmation always, and also in Holy Orders. But the last anointing with the holy oil is when we lie on the bed of sickness and receive ‘the last Sacraments,’ as they are called ; those, that is, that are given to us in preparation for death,—Penance, Holy Viaticum, and Extreme Unction. Unction is another word for anointing, and Extreme Unction means the *last anointing* that we receive.

**Institution.**—We do not know for certain when this Sacrament was instituted by Christ ; but S. Mark speaks of our Lord sending forth His Apostles two and two, and giving them power to cast out devils, and tells us that they went forth and cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.<sup>1</sup> This, then, may have been the time when this Sacrament was instituted. S. James the Apostle, who is called the brother, *i. e.* kinsman, of our Lord, directs that it should be used. ‘Is any man sick among you, let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord ; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up ; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> S. Mark vi. 13.

<sup>2</sup> S. James v. 14.



In this passage we see (1) that Christians when sick, *i.e.* dangerously and seriously so, are commanded to send for the priests, who, therefore, (2) are the ministers of this Sacrament, and (3) are to administer it by anointing the sick person with oil, and to pray over him; and (4) the effects of the Sacrament are, that the sick person will be raised up, and have his sins forgiven him.

**Outward Sign.**—The outward sign, then, of this Sacrament is the anointing with oil by a priest, accompanied with prayer. In this Sacrament, as in others, our Lord took one of the common usages of life, and raised it into being a means of grace when used by His children and as He ordained. For it was the custom to anoint the sick and wounded as a means of cure.<sup>3</sup> The good Samaritan is represented as tending the wounded man by pouring oil and wine into his wounds. The Bishop every year on Maundy Thursday blesses some oil, called the oil of the sick, to be used in this Sacrament. The priest administers it by anointing the sick person on his eyes, ears, nose, mouth, hands, and feet, these being the principal parts of the body which may have been the instruments of sin by misuse. While anointing the parts, he uses this prayer: ‘Through this Holy Unction and His most tender compassion, may the Lord pardon thee whatever thou hast done wrong through sight, hearing,’ and the rest.

**The Inward Grace.**—The effects produced by this Sacrament are of a twofold character, on the body and the soul. As many of those sick persons who were anointed by the Apostles were healed, so this is often the effect of this Sacrament now—that those who receive it obtain fresh force and vigour, and recover from their

<sup>3</sup> ‘They’ (the wounds) ‘are not bound up, nor dressed, nor fomented with oil’ (Isai. i. 6).

illness. But all are appointed to die at last, even those healed by our Lord's own touch; and if the appointed hour has come in which we too, like them, are to pass out of this world, this Sacrament gives the strength and support we stand in need of in our passage out of this life. If the sick man is still suffering from sin, this Sacrament has power to remove the guilt of venial, and in certain cases even of mortal, sin, when accident, and not want of proper dispositions, has prevented him from making his confession. It has power also to lessen or remove the effects of sin, the inclination and attachment to sin, and the tepidity and languors of soul arising from habits of sin, and thus, like oil, heal the wounds of sin. And as oil not only heals, but soothes, so the grace of this Sacrament calms and comforts the soul in its last agony, when the fear of death and the anxious dread of the trial and sentence of the Judge are hanging over it. In his last moments it helps the dying man to be hopeful and tranquil, and gives him grace to look up to God and see in Him, not only a Judge, but a tender and loving Father, who, despite his sins, will receive him into His arms.

**Dispositions.**—This is the grace which this Sacrament gives; but, as in the case of other Sacraments, the amount of this that we receive depends on the dispositions with which we receive the Sacrament. The most necessary disposition is to be in a state of grace; and to insure this, it is right to go to confession by way of preparation. And besides this, we should use our own efforts by prayer, good thoughts, meditations, and resolutions to prepare ourselves for death and judgment. In proportion as we do our best to help ourselves, so we shall feel the great help which this Sacrament gives to us.

Extreme Unction is not absolutely necessary for salvation, but it would be a grievous sin to refuse so great a means of grace if we could receive it. It cannot be received more than once in the same illness; but if a person recovered after receiving it, and fell ill again, he could again receive it.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### HOLY ORDERS.

EXPLANATION OF NAME ; INSTITUTION ; OUTWARD SIGN AND MINISTER ; EFFECTS ; PREPARATION.

THE first five Sacraments which have so far been spoken of were instituted by Christ to be received by all the faithful. The remaining two, Holy Orders and Matrimony, are not intended to be received by all, but by particular persons, according as they remain in the world or are called to leave it.

**Explanation of Name.**—Holy Orders means the order or gradation of ranks in the sacred ministry. The Sacrament of Holy Order means the Sacrament by which the priesthood is conferred. But those who are called into the sacred ministry or service of God's Church are not admitted at once to the priesthood, but ascend to it by certain steps or orders. The first four of these steps are called minor or lesser Orders. Those who would enter the ministry had first to fill the office of *Doorkeeper* to the church ; next to fill the office of *Reader* or *Lector* ; next that of *Exorcist*, for using the exorcisms ordained by the Church for driving out evil spirits ; and lastly that of *Acolyte* or server. Every one who is admitted to the priesthood still passes through these different offices. Afterwards he begins to enter the higher steps of the ministry, called the greater or sacred Orders. The first of these is the sub-diaconate, which is a very serious step for a person to take, because by the present law of the Church a person who has once been admitted to the

sub-diaconate cannot change. Though not yet a priest, he has all the obligations of a priest, and cannot go back to the world, or engage in business, or enter into married life. The next step is the diaconate, or order of the deacons. The deacons were instituted by the Apostles, as we read in the Acts,<sup>1</sup> in order to do the subordinate work of the priesthood in receiving and taking care of the offerings of the people, and spending them on the maintenance of the Church and its ministers, and the necessities of the poor. They were also permitted to give Baptism and to assist the priest at the Holy Sacrifice. Then lastly comes the last step to the priesthood. It must be noted that these are seven steps in ascending to the office of priest. There are other degrees of rank among the rulers of the Church, such as Bishops, who are priests having authority given them to rule over the faithful and to ordain other priests.<sup>2</sup> There are Cardinals,—the princes, as it were, of the Church; and above all is the Holy Father, or Head of the Church on earth. These ranks of dignity and authority in the *Hierarchy*, or ruling body of the Church, are different from the seven steps that lead up to the priesthood. Holy Order is not a Sacrament to make men Cardinals or Prelates or Monsignors, but to make them priests.

**Institution.**—A priest has several different offices and duties. He has to teach and preach, to direct and guide the members of the Church in spiritual matters; he has to administer Sacraments. But the highest and greatest of his functions is to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Eucharist. Our Lord called His twelve Apostles into the sacred ministry a good while before He gave them

<sup>1</sup> Acts vi.

<sup>2</sup> The first priests ordained by the Apostles were almost all of them Bishops as well.

this power. They went about with Him and learned from Him how to fulfil their sacred duties. He sent them out to preach, to minister to the sick, and even to work miracles, to instruct those who listened to them, and to baptise. But it was only the night before He suffered that he instituted the Holy Eucharist, not only as spiritual food given *to* them, but as His Body given *for* them, and His Blood shed *for* them for the remission of sins. And He not only gave this sacrifice to them, but He at the same time gave them power to do what He was doing, and even a command to do it. ‘Do this in commemoration of Me.’ This, then, is the time when our Lord instituted the Sacrament of Holy Order, giving His Apostles power to consecrate bread and wine into being His own Body and Blood, and then to offer them up for the remission of sins. Afterwards He endowed them with another power—the power of remitting sins. This was after the Resurrection, when He breathed on them and said, ‘Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain they are retained.’<sup>3</sup>

**Outward Sign and Minister.**—This Sacrament can only be administered by a Bishop. The way it is given is by imposition of hands,<sup>4</sup> which is the principal outward sign, signifying the transmission by the Bishop of the power which he is possessed of to the person who is being ordained. But the Bishop also anoints his hands with the holy chrism, and delivers the sacred vessels to him, saying to him, ‘Receive power to offer sacrifice for the living and the dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and

<sup>3</sup> S. John xx. 22.

<sup>4</sup> This is mentioned in Holy Scripture: ‘I admonish thee that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the imposition of my hands’ (2 Tim. i. 6).

of the Holy Ghost.' There are special times appointed for giving the Sacrament of Holy Orders: the Ember-weeks, which come four times a year,—in Advent, Lent, Whitsun-week, and in September. In these weeks the Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday are fast-days. And the origin of these fast-days is that when any are to be ordained to the office of priest the people may fast and pray, in order to obtain worthy ministers for the Church and abundant graces for those who are selected for the priesthood.<sup>5</sup>

**Effects of this Sacrament.**—The Sacrament of Holy Orders, in investing persons with the office and dignity of the priesthood, gives them a power and imprints on them a character. When this is done it is done for ever, and cannot be repeated or undone. Nor does this depend on the worthiness of the recipient. Just as the Sovereign might appoint a man to be a judge, and however wicked and unjust he might be, he would still be a real judge. But besides this first and principal effect of the Sacrament, it also gives grace to those who are ordained to fulfil their sacred duties well. But this effect of the Sacrament would, as in the case of Confirmation, be hindered by the person ordained not being capable of receiving it, through being in a state of sin. In that case he would receive the power and character of a priest, but he would not receive the grace of Holy Orders until he had repented of his sin.

**Preparation.**—This leads us to see that those who receive this Sacrament are bound to examine themselves that they may be sure to receive it in a state of grace. And to secure this, as well as to make sure of having a true vocation, those who are to be ordained always make

<sup>5</sup> When SS. Paul and Barnabas were ordained at Antioch, it was with fasting and prayer (Acts xiii. 3).



a retreat of some days beforehand. A vocation means being called by God to this sacred office. For as S. Paul writes, 'No man taketh to himself this office,' but only 'he that is called of God as Aaron was.'<sup>6</sup> When SS. Paul and Barnabas were ordained at Antioch, it was after the Holy Ghost had inspired the rulers and teachers of the Church there to select them. The Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Paul and Barnabas for the work to which I have taken them.'<sup>7</sup> This vocation does not mean that a man must be miraculously called to the priesthood. It may be shown by outward circumstances, and by aptitude for the work, by a disposition and desire for it, by innocence of life, and the encouragement of superiors. But there is danger of mistake and deception in this, as in other things; and the consequences of a mistake are so serious that no one should offer himself to be ordained except after a long trial, and a great deal of thought, and prayer, and spiritual direction.

<sup>6</sup> Heb. v. 4.

<sup>7</sup> Acts xiii. 2.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### MATRIMONY.

MEANING OF NAME ; FIRST INSTITUTION ; INSTITUTION AS A SACRAMENT ; OUTWARD SIGN AND MINISTER ; INWARD GRACE ; INDISSOLUBILITY ; RULES OF THE CHURCH ; PRECAUTIONS ON THE SUBJECT ; IMMEDIATE PREPARATION ; DUTIES OF MARRIED PERSONS.

**Meaning of Name.**—The word Matrimony is derived from two Latin words, *matris munus*, which signify the office of mother, because, as the Roman Catechism teaches, the principal end of marriage is the rearing of children, which belongs to the mother.

**First Institution.**—The union of man and woman in marriage was ordained by God at the beginning of the world. An account of it is given in the first chapter of Genesis: ‘God created man in His own image. Male and female created He them. And God blessed them and said, Increase and multiply, and fill the earth.’<sup>1</sup> This, then, was the primary and principal end of marriage. A little later a more particular account is given of the creation of Eve, and the second great end of marriage is spoken of. ‘And the Lord said, It is not good for man to be alone; let Us make him a help like unto himself.’ And then we read that ‘the Lord cast a deep sleep on Adam, and when he was asleep He took one of his ribs and filled up the flesh for it. And the Lord God built the rib which He took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam; and Adam said, This is now bone of my

<sup>1</sup> Gen. i. 27.

bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.<sup>2</sup> Our Lord referred to this passage in speaking to the Pharisees, and added, 'Wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh. What God therefore hath joined together let not man put asunder.'<sup>3</sup>

**Institution as a Sacrament.**—Up to the time of our Lord, Matrimony, though indeed a solemn contract, was not, of course, a Sacrament. And so divorce was permitted and polygamy also, as we see by the Sacred History. Amongst Jews, Mahometans, heathens, and infidels<sup>4</sup> both these practices prevail now. It was our Lord who brought back marriage to its primitive institution of an indissoluble union of one man with one woman, and raised it to be a Sacrament for the members of His Church. He adopted as an outward sign the usual agreement, or contract made by the parties, with the addition that it was to be a perpetual one, and annexed to this contract a grace consisting in a Divine ratification of the contract, and the gift of help to maintain the contract faithfully, and to live up to the ends for which marriage was instituted. The Protestant Reformers rejected marriage as a Sacrament; but S. Augustine calls it so, the tradition of the Church has taught it to be so; and the Council of Trent, after considering the question, defined it to be 'truly and properly a Sacrament of the New Law, instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ,' though it does not say that it is equal in dignity or necessity to other Sacra-

<sup>2</sup> Gen. ii.

<sup>3</sup> S. Matt. xix. 6.

<sup>4</sup> We must remember that the contract of marriage which they make is not the contract of Christian marriage; and so, when they break that contract, the sin is not so great as if they violated Christian marriage.

ments. When our Lord instituted it as a Sacrament is not certain. Some of the Fathers think it was when He worked His first miracle at the marriage feast at Cana that he sanctified it by His presence, as He did the water by being Himself baptised in the Jordan.

**The Outward Sign and Minister.**—The outward sign, then, of this Sacrament is the contract made by the man and woman. This must be made in words, expressing not an intention to take each other at some future time, but that they do take one another now; and this mutual consent, clearly expressed by each in any form of words, is sufficient so long as it is voluntary. For if it happened that a person was compelled by extreme fear or violence to say words which he or she did not mean, and were to show as soon as they could that they did not mean it and had not consented, it would not be a true marriage. This mutual consent is ordered by the Church to be made before the priest of the parish. Thus the priest was considered by many to be the minister of this Sacrament. But he is not exactly the minister of the Sacrament, as marriage can be contracted before other persons, although it is a grievous sin for it to be so contracted without necessity.<sup>5</sup>

**The Inward Grace.**—The inward grace annexed to this Sacrament is assistance to maintain the obligations and fulfil the objects of marriage. The first and chief obligation of the married people is to keep the marriage vow, to be faithful to one another, to love each other as man and wife, and no one else. Married people who are unfaithful to one another, and give their love to another,

<sup>5</sup> After the man and woman have mutually given their consent, the priest says, 'I join you together in matrimony, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' Afterwards he blesses the ring, which the bridegroom puts on the bride's finger.

break the sacred promise they have made before the altar of God, and violate the sixth Commandment. But our Lord, in imposing a strict obligation on them of love and fidelity to each other, promised a special grace to help them to keep this sacred obligation, which receives a Divine ratification in the Sacrament of Matrimony. The principal end of marriage being the rearing of a family, married people take on themselves a second obligation, which is, that they will bring up any children they may have carefully and religiously. They are bound to do this by the fourth Commandment. But as it is a difficult duty, this Sacrament gives a grace or help to fulfil this duty well. By the contract that the man and woman make, they undertake these two obligations of married life; and God in ratifying the contract confirms the obligations, and gives grace to fulfil them.

**Indissolubility.**—Marriage, then, between Christians, or when one of the parties is a Christian, is not merely a contract, but a contract which, when lawfully made, is sealed and ratified by God, and is therefore indissoluble. It was our Lord who said of it, ‘What God hath joined together let not man put asunder.’ The man and wife are bound to each other for life. They may be allowed, under some special circumstances, to live apart from one another; but neither can, under any circumstances, be allowed to marry again so long as the other party is alive.<sup>6</sup> This was one of the points on which our Lord made the obligations of Christians more strict than they had been under the Old Law. In the Sermon on the Mount, He explained this to His disciples;<sup>7</sup> and on another occasion, when this question was put to Him by

<sup>6</sup> ‘But to them that are married, not I, but the Lord, commandeth, Let not the wife depart from her husband’ (1 Cor. vii. 10).

<sup>7</sup> S. Matt. v. 31.

the Pharisees, He spoke still more distinctly and strongly.<sup>8</sup> This, then, is the law of God ; and it is important to bear it in mind in any country in which divorces are allowed by the civil law. Those who are Christians cannot get rid of the bond of marriage by help of a civil court, nor, indeed, of any court. As marriage is indissoluble by Christ's appointment, even the Church cannot dispense from the marriage vows. She has in some cases annulled a marriage when one of the parties has been called to religious life before they lived as man and wife. But when once the contract has been confirmed and acted on, or the marriage consummated, as it is called, the Church has no power to dissolve it. There have also been some cases in which it has been discovered that there was some impediment to the marriage, something wanting to make it a true marriage, and so the Church has permitted what was called 'a divorce;' but it was not a divorce, but a declaration that the parties were not really married at all. For the Church cannot 'dispense' any one from keeping the laws of God, though she can dispense from observing her own rules of discipline.

**Rules of the Church.**—Besides the law of God concerning marriages, the Church has also made several rules or laws, and some that are very strict ones. She has forbidden those who are related to one another, such as cousins, to marry, and also those who are akin through marriage or through spiritual relationship—that is, through being godfather or godmother to the other. And she commands that all who are to be married should have their names publicly given out three times, in case any one may know of any impediment. This is called the publication of banns. She also forbids her children to

<sup>8</sup> S. Matt. xix.

marry those who are not members of the Catholic Church; and she forbids them to solemnise marriage at certain times of the year—in Advent and Lent—because they are times of religious observance and devotion. The Church has made these rules for the general good of her children. But as she made the rules, so she can take off the rules. And if there is any good reason why any particular person or any particular country should be excused from observing a rule, she will give a special permission, or, as it is called, a *Dispensation*. Persons, then, who are thinking of marrying should be careful before they engage themselves to consider and find out whether what they intend to do is in any way forbidden by the Church. As the rules of the Church are too many for them to know, the only safe way is for them to consult their parish priest or director, so as to see that there is no difficulty, or if so, whether he can obtain a dispensation for them. For some dispensations can be easily got, but some are very difficult. It is easy to get leave to be married during Advent or Lent for any reasonable cause. It is more difficult to obtain a dispensation from having the banns published, as it is important that there should be no secrecy about the marriage, as if something was not all right; and it is important, too, that every one should know who the people are who are married. But if there is any special reason the leave will be granted. Nor is it very difficult to get a dispensation for being married to a person who is within the prohibited degrees, if the relationship or affinity is a distant one. But the Church is more unwilling to grant dispensation to be married to one who is not a Catholic. These ‘mixed marriages,’ as they are called, lead very often to unhappiness in married life, and to the children being brought up irreligiously. The Church therefore permits them



only where they cannot be helped,<sup>9</sup> or where there is at least some strong reason for them, and then only 'for very grave reasons and under very special conditions.' She prevents them as much as she can.

**Precautions on the Subject of Marriage.**—The first thing, then, to be remembered by those who would enter into the married state is to be very careful that they do not become attached to some one to whom they ought not or cannot be married. They ought to consult their director at the very first, for fear of getting into some difficulty which they cannot get out of. Moreover it is the duty of a Christian not to determine either to marry or to keep unmarried, just as he himself pleases. Those who can marry ought also to think which will please God most—not merely whether it will give them pleasure and advance them in life, and make them better off, but also whether it will be for the good of their souls and help them to secure eternal happiness as well as happiness in this world. They must be on their guard against marrying from any low or unworthy motive. They have not only to think whether it is best for them to marry, but also whether it is a good thing to marry a particular person. The choice they are making is generally for the whole of their life, and may perhaps lead to their being happier and better, or to their being made very miserable. As they cannot change when once they have made their choice, they ought to be very careful in making it, not giving their consent rashly or imprudently and in a hurry, but thinking over it, and taking advice and praying earnestly to be guarded from making a mis-

<sup>9</sup> 'Bear not the yoke together with unbelievers' (2 Cor. vi. 14). It is worthy of notice what great care Abraham and Isaac took that their children should not be married to the idolatrous people of the land. See Gen. xxiv. xxviii.

take in so important a matter. When once they have given a promise of marriage they cannot break their promise, any more than they can in anything else that they agree to do. To break a lawful promise of marriage is a grievous sin, unless for some very serious cause, such as changes the whole case. Formerly the promise to marry used to be given publicly and solemnly, and used to be called *Espousals*; and a person, after being once espoused, could not marry any one else.

**Immediate Preparation.**—When the marriage is agreed on, those who are to be married have to prepare themselves to receive this Sacrament worthily. After arranging the time and putting in the banns, they have to make a careful confession, so as to make sure that they are in a state of grace, and do not receive the Sacrament with the guilt of sacrilege on them instead of the blessing of God. Besides this, they must be sure to mention to their confessor that they are making their confession in preparation for being married, in order that he may give them advice, and, if necessary, instruction about the serious duties and responsibilities of the married state. For there is danger of being ignorant and thoughtless about these. And thirdly, those who are taking upon themselves important duties should not only know what those duties are, but make good resolutions to keep the promises they are making to one another and to God.<sup>10</sup> This Sacrament gives grace to those who receive it worthily, helping them to perform their promises; but it is only to help them if they try hard themselves. It is not given to save them from exerting themselves, or to

<sup>10</sup> 'For they who in such a way receive Matrimony as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and give themselves to their lust as the horse and mule which have no understanding, over them the devil hath power' (Tobias vi. 17).

fulfil the duties and bear the burdens of the married state instead of them.

**Duties of Married Persons.**—The duties of those who are married are very often difficult and burdensome. They are twofold : (1) towards each other and (2) towards their children. Towards each other they have the duty of love and faithfulness, a duty which is easy enough at first, when their feelings to each other are warm and excited, and they have been married because they do love each other. But when married people are enjoined to love one another, it does not mean with this love of passion, but with a rational love, and one that is to be maintained ‘for better, for worse ; for richer, for poorer ; in sickness and in health, and until death parts them.’<sup>11</sup> It means loving them when it is more difficult, as well as when it is easy and pleasant,—loving them by honouring them, standing by them, protecting them, respecting them, and keeping up this behaviour to the end. It is often difficult for people to live together in agreement ; they may have different ways, tempers, and habits ; sometimes sickness, poverty, old age, makes them very disagreeable to each other, and they separate. But married people undertake not to separate, but to put up with one another, to bear the trials of life together, and it is only by having such a love as will make them respect and give in to each other<sup>12</sup> that they can do this. The love of passion helps them to do this and gives them a start in it ; but their duty is to persevere in it, and always to love and be faithful to each other, and it is this that

<sup>11</sup> S. Paul points to the sacrifice that married people have to make in order to love each other, when he says : ‘Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved His Church, and delivered Himself up for it.’ And again, ‘As the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things’ (Eph. v. 24-25).

<sup>12</sup> Marriage Service.

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the grace of the Sacrament helps them to. The other great duty of married people is towards their children; to bring them up carefully, both as regards their bodies and souls. But this duty comes under the fourth Commandment, and has been already spoken of.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### ON PRAYER.

WHAT IT IS ; KINDS OF PRAYER ; THE LORD'S PRAYER ; ITS DIFFERENT PARTS ; THE PREFACE ; HOW GOD'S NAME IS HALLOWED ; MEANING OF GOD'S KINGDOM ; HOW GOD'S WILL IS DONE ; OUR DAILY BREAD ; OUR TRESPASSES ; TEMPTATIONS ; DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

**What Prayer is.**—The simplest explanation of prayer is that it is speaking to God. God is everywhere present ; and to pray is to recollect that He is near us, and to speak to Him as present. To think about God is a good preparation for prayer. But prayer means more than this. It means turning ourselves to Him and addressing Him. Hence the Catechism speaks of prayer as the *raising up of our minds and hearts* to God. It says nothing about words, as these are not necessary to constitute prayer. If we speak to God in our hearts this is called meditation, or mental prayer ; if we also use words, it is called vocal prayer. But unless we aim at directing our thoughts and hearts to God it is not prayer at all. There must be some little at least of speaking to God as our Maker, or Father, or Redeemer, or future Judge. A mere cold thinking about God is not enough to make a prayer. ‘Saying prayers’ is praying in the case of those who, in saying them, intend to speak to God even if their thoughts wander and they are distracted ; but repeating words like a parrot, without recollecting that He is present or trying to think of Him, is not prayer at all, and rather offends than pleases God.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘This people honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me’ (S. Mark vii. 6).

**Kinds of Prayer.**—There are two principal kinds of prayer—*prayer of petition* and *prayer of praise*. To ‘pray’ for a thing often means to ask for it earnestly and humbly; and prayer of petition means asking humbly of God those things that we want, whatever they are, for body or soul. But we ought to pray, not only for our own sake, in order to ask for things, but as a duty and homage we owe to God, in order to adore and worship Him, to thank Him for His goodness, His blessings, and His gifts to ourselves; this is called prayer of praise, or commonly praising God. This prayer is not only a means of blessing and grace to ourselves, and a good work by which we benefit others, but it is above all a duty we owe to God. Nor is it possible to please God if we neglect this duty. Now we may use these two kinds of prayer either in *private*, or, as we say, ‘to ourselves,’ or joining with others in *common* prayers or *public prayers*.

**The Our Father.**—We read in the Gospel of S. Luke that on a certain occasion one of our Lord’s disciples said to Him, ‘Lord, teach us how to pray, as John also taught his disciples.’<sup>2</sup> And our Lord complied with this request and said, ‘When you pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven,’ and the rest. Hence this prayer is not only called after the two first words with which it begins, but it is also called the Lord’s Prayer, because it was given us by Christ our Lord. Being given by our Lord Himself, the Catechism calls it the best of all prayers, not only because it is His gift, but because, when studied carefully, it teaches us, as no other prayer will, how to pray. It is so short and simple that it is easily learnt and said; and yet it contains so much and such deep meaning, that those who have once taken the trouble to study and enter into its meaning do not grow weary of

<sup>2</sup> S. Luke xi.

using it, as they are apt to do about common prayers ; and it is moreover a prayer that is suitable to people in all conditions and circumstances of life. It resembles one of those flowers of the field, which are so common that we think nothing of them ; yet if we examine them closely and carefully by means of a magnifying-glass, we are filled with interest and wonder at their delicacy and beauty of structure.

**Parts of the Lord's Prayer.**—It consists of a short preface or address, and seven petitions, which are divided something like the Commandments : (1) into those that refer to God and our duty to Him ; and (2) those that relate to what we need for ourselves ; our Lord thus teaching us the *ends* of prayer. For we are principally bound to pray as a duty and homage we owe to God. It is one of the principal ways of worshipping Him. By it we come before Him, to acknowledge Him as our Lord and King, to praise Him for His greatness and goodness, to thank Him for His benefits to us, to profess our readiness to serve Him and do His will. This is the first end of prayer. The second is that which has more reference to ourselves. In it we pray to God ; not so much for His sake, as for our own—to lay our wants before Him, to ask the continuance of His goodness and mercy to us, and such fresh gifts as may be best for us. The first three petitions are for the first object, the four last are for the second. In some versions of the Gospels there is a doxology added : 'For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.' But there seems no doubt that this conclusion, though very ancient, was not given by our Lord, and so the Church does not teach us to use it.

**Preface or Address.**—In common familiar conversation with our ordinary companions we talk without preface



or address; but we never do this in speaking to our superiors. Indeed, we take no little pains to learn how to address them rightly. Whether we address them by letter or by speaking, we begin in such a way as to let them see that we know whom we are addressing, and that we do not forget their position and our own. This is what our Lord teaches us to do in the first words of the prayer He gave us—*Our Father who art in heaven*. They remind us that we are opening our mouth to speak to God. By them, if said thoughtfully and reverently, we put ourselves in the presence of God. They instruct us in the attitude we should be in, both of mind and body, in speaking to God.<sup>3</sup> And this ‘recollection’ of ourselves and what we are doing is the greatest safeguard against careless prayer, and the easiest way of avoiding wilful distractions.

**Our Father.**—The particular form of this address to God is worthy of special consideration, as it helps us to raise not only our mind, but our heart, to God. Our Lord does not teach us to begin our prayer by ‘Your Divine Majesty,’ or ‘O Supreme King of Heaven and Earth,’ or by addressing Him as our ‘Incomprehensible Creator,’ or our ‘Awful Judge,’ but as ‘Our Father.’ This conveys a definite idea to every little child. We know and feel what our father has been to us,—the author of our life; the one who has brought us up, feeding, clothing, educating, protecting us. A certain awe and fear have been mixed with our love of him, a remembrance of his strictness, and perhaps his punishments. Yet not so but that we have had full confidence in his loving us, caring for our welfare, and being at hand to defend us from any one who would hurt us. Our Lord, then, would

<sup>3</sup> ‘Before prayer prepare thy soul, and be not as a man that tempteth God’ (Ecclus xviii. 23).

have us transfer this idea of our father on earth to our Father in heaven,<sup>4</sup> and think of Him while we are speaking as of one who has all the feelings and love of a father, yet with his strictness too. For we are all God's children, inasmuch as He made and still feeds and preserves and loves us as His creatures.<sup>5</sup> And we, the disciples of our Lord, are His own in a special manner, because He has chosen us to be His adopted children, and made us the members of His Church by Baptism.

Our.—Yet the word *our* reminds us that though God wishes us each one to look up to Him with the reverence and love and confidence of children towards their father, yet we are not to consider that His regard is exclusively for us. Others are God's children too. He loves them also, and expects us to love them as His children and as our brethren, and to think and pray for them as well as for ourselves. A selfish regard for ourselves only tends to alienate God's love from us, just as those children who only think of themselves are least regarded by their parents, who love all and wish their children to do so.

Who art in Heaven.—The words 'Who art in heaven' are added to remind us, that while God in His tender love for us desires that we should address Him as our Father, yet He is our Heavenly Father,—the Divine Majesty, the King of kings, who dwells in the heaven of heavens.<sup>6</sup> God is indeed present everywhere, and

<sup>4</sup> 'As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on those that fear Him' (Ps. ciii. 13).

<sup>5</sup> 'For Thou hatest nothing of those things which Thou hast made' (Wis. xi. 25).

<sup>6</sup> 'To Thee have I lifted up my eyes, who dwelleth in the heavens' (Ps. cxxii.). 'Who is like the Lord, who dwelleth on high, and looketh down on the low things in heaven and on earth?' (ibid.)

‘the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him;’ but we think of Him in heaven, not as hidden from sight, but as seen in His glory and majesty. God is continually said in Holy Scripture to dwell in heaven, *i.e.* not merely to be present there, but to manifest Himself. We live in the close presence of God here; but we are taught to look forward to seeing Him face to face in heaven, which, since we are the children of God, is to be our home. These words, then, help us to raise our thoughts and desires off this earth to the place where God Himself dwells, and where we are to live in His presence.

**Hallowed be Thy Name.**—Coming to the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, we should observe that there is a certain order in them as in the Commandments, according to their importance. As God is above and before all, the first Commandment concerns our duty and worship to Him. The first and great Commandment is to love God; and so in the Lord’s Prayer the first petition is that we, and all others too, may fulfil this duty of honouring, loving, praising God before all things else. And as the second Commandment enjoins reverence to God’s *name*—that is, speaking of Him, and all that belongs to Him, with reverence and fear—so the same expression of God’s name is used here, where we pray that we and others may fulfil what is commanded in the second Commandment, by hallowing—that is, honouring and reverencing—God, and all that belongs to Him, in our actions, in speaking of Him, and in thinking of Him. To hallow means to make holy, and also to keep holy. Here it has, of course, the second meaning. God is infinitely holy, and everything that pertains to Him derives sanctity from Him. What we pray for here is, that His holiness may be revered, and all that belongs to Him may be honoured on that

account. His name is perfectly hallowed in heaven ; we pray that *we* may do so on earth.

We hallow God's name not only by praising and extolling Him in our words, but still more by making His glory the aim and end of our actions. It is this aim that sanctifies our actions. Whatever great and noble actions and good works men do, they have no value in God's eyes unless they are done for Him. But not only great deeds, but very insignificant and common ones, have great value before God if they are done for Him *as* He wishes them to be done, and *because* He wishes them. The first and great aim, then, of him who would be perfect is to learn to do everything, not to please himself or other men, but to please God ; and so this is the first petition that our Lord puts into our mouths for ourselves, and for others, that we may hallow His name, and seek His glory and not our own.

**Thy Kingdom come.**—The word 'kingdom' has been already explained.<sup>7</sup> Whatever He reigns over is called His kingdom. God is King of kings and Lord of lords, and by His power reigns over all, 'doing His will with the powers of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.'<sup>8</sup> But this is not the meaning of God's kingdom here. It is not those that He reigns over by His power, but by His grace, that make up His kingdom. He will not own any unwilling subjects. It is those whose hearts<sup>9</sup> He reigns over that are the subjects of His kingdom. The word 'kingdom,' then, is here used very much as we use the word 'reign,' and we pray that His reign over men's hearts may be more and more extended. This petition follows naturally from the first. There we are taught to pray that we may glorify God. God is glorified by our

<sup>7</sup> See p. 130, *et seq.*

<sup>8</sup> Dan. iv. 32.

<sup>9</sup> 'The kingdom of God is within you' (S. Luke xvii. 21).

submitting ourselves to Him, and in this petition we pray that men may do this more and more, and so become members of His kingdom on earth and increase it. Men cannot love God without desiring that others should do so. They cannot be striving to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, without fearing for others as well as themselves; for those who have no faith; for those in heresy and schism; for Jews, Turks, and heathens; for those living without either fear or love of God, 'in darkness and the shadow of death.' We are taught to pray that God may come to reign over their hearts too, and that they may come to be members of His kingdom. Hence this petition is particularly appropriate when we would pray for others—our own friends, relatives, or neighbours—who 'know not God,' or, at least, do not serve Him.

It has also a special meaning as applied to ourselves. God does reign over the hearts of the members of His Church. They belong to His kingdom, because they believe in, hope in, and love Him in some degree; but as regards ordinary Christians, only imperfectly. He rules over our hearts and lives in some things, but not in all; and at some times more, at other times less. There are still portions of our hearts that are reserved and not given up entirely to Him. In this petition we are taught to pray that He may reign over us entirely and perfectly; that His kingdom may be extended over every part of our hearts and lives; that we may be altogether controlled by His grace.

A third meaning given to this petition is that the kingdom of God's glory may quickly come. Those who serve God as strangers and pilgrims in this world look forward to Christ's second coming and to His reign over the Saints in His kingdom at the end of the world. In the early ages the Christians seem to have been living in

daily expectation of His coming, and this petition of the 'Our Father' was a prayer that He might quickly come in His glory and majesty.<sup>10</sup>

Thy Will be done on Earth.—God, being omnipotent, does what He pleases. He carries out all His designs. It is His will that is done, notwithstanding the carelessness and wickedness of men. What our Lord teaches us to pray for here is that it may be done by us here on earth, as it is in heaven by the Saints and Angels. This petition naturally follows in order from the last. For if we desire and pray that God's kingdom may be extended and enlarged over men's hearts and over our own more perfectly, how can we help to promote this? The only way is to try to do God's will, to keep His Commandments. It is the effort to do this which pleases God and draws down fresh grace on us. It is the example of this which more than anything else influences other men and leads them into His kingdom. We ask, then, in this petition for ourselves and for others—those for whom we desire to pray, because they are dear to us, or because they are going astray and especially need our prayers—that we may do God's will more and more in the perfect way that it is done in heaven. The Saints and servants of God do His will, not in a grudging spirit or only sometimes, or because God's eye is upon them, and they cannot help it, but on all occasions, willingly, cheerfully, perfectly, and with a loving heart. It is this that we are set to do as our work here—to serve God, to do His will; and sanctity or perfection consists in studying and seeking to find out the will of God in everything and then striving to do it, despite of difficulties and discouragements. True devotion consists not in an empty sen-

<sup>10</sup> 'Surely I come quickly. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus' (Apoc. xxii. 20).



timent or a state of excited feeling, but in a loving readiness to do God's will on all occasions. The one way in which we can hallow God's name and extend His kingdom on earth is by doing His will.

**Give us this Day our daily Bread.**—This fourth petition is the first of the second part of the 'Our Father,' in which we pray for those things that concern ourselves, and so the form of this petition is changed into asking what is necessary for 'us.' The word 'bread' is used here as we commonly use it—for those things that are most necessary for the body,—for our temporal wants. But it does not only mean food for the body, but also food for the soul. For we consist of soul as well as body, and the former requires nourishment and support for its life and well-being quite as much as the latter. We are reminded of this by what our Lord said in answer to the devil, who tempted Him to satisfy His hunger by changing the stones into bread. 'Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'<sup>11</sup> And when the multitudes followed our Lord, after having been fed in the desert by the miracle of the five loaves and two fishes, our Lord told them not to labour only for the meat or food that perishes, but for that which endureth to everlasting life.<sup>12</sup> The soul lives and is sustained by the grace of God and the word of God—that is, by instruction and meditation on what God has said to us. The highest and greatest food of the soul is the Holy Eucharist, and this living bread is one sense of these words; but the soul is also sustained by the grace which it obtains by the other Sacraments and by prayer, by reading the Holy Scriptures and spiritual books, by meditation, and by the exercise and practices of devotion.

<sup>11</sup> S. Matt. iv. 4.

<sup>12</sup> S. John vi.



We are taught to ask for what we want 'this day,' or day by day, to teach us that we should be satisfied with seeking from God's hands not great riches or superfluities, but those things that we need for our present and immediate wants, leaving the care of the future in God's hands.<sup>13</sup> And the word 'our' reminds us not to think of ourselves only, but of others,—those who are in want and whom we are unable to help, those who look up to us and depend on us, all who are most in want, poverty, and distress, those for whom we are specially bound to pray.

**Forgive us our Trespases.**—So far the petitions of the Lord's Prayer have been to ask for good things; but in this and the two following petitions we pray to be delivered from what is evil. And first, from that which is the greatest evil,—sin. So we pray that the evil of past sins may be taken away by our sins being forgiven. The word 'trespases' or sins, given in S. Luke's Gospel, is given in S. Matthew's Gospel as 'debts;' and thus we are reminded that offences and trespases against God's law have consequences behind them, which are hanging over us like debts till they are either paid or remitted. Our Lord teaches us to ask 'Our Father' for their remission; for He is merciful and willing to forgive. In many passages of the Gospels—but most of all in the parable of the Prodigal Son—the mercifulness of God towards His children and His readiness to forgive is set forth; and the same thing is taught us practically here by our being taught, by Him whom we have offended, to ask for forgiveness, and that He will give it to us. We pray for the forgiveness of our own sins and those of others; for those whom we know to be in a state of sin, that they may be

<sup>13</sup> 'Having food and wherewith to be covered, with these we are content' (1 Tim. vi. 8).

led to repentance; for those who are our friends and dear to us, that God would forgive them as well as ourselves.

Two things should be remarked respecting this petition. When we are taught to pray for forgiveness for our sins, we must not think that this supersedes the necessity of right dispositions and doing our own part towards having them forgiven. For how can we pray sincerely for forgiveness, if we do not do what is in our own power to have them forgiven? Our Lord, who taught us to ask for forgiveness, Himself died on the Cross that we might be forgiven. But He has ordained (1) certain Sacraments as the means through which this forgiveness is to be obtained, and (2) certain dispositions as the conditions that are necessary. Praying for forgiveness is not meant to do instead of these, but to help us to them. We must be willing to do all we can ourselves towards obtaining forgiveness in order to use this prayer with fervour and effect. But secondly, our Lord has Himself made this petition conditional on our praying with right dispositions towards our neighbour, as well as towards God. He teaches us to ask for forgiveness of our sins, *as* we forgive those that sin against us. This does not indeed mean that to the same extent, or just in the same measure, as we forgive our neighbour will He forgive us; but it does mean that we should strive and aim to do to others that which we ask God to do to ourselves. Our Lord Himself draws our attention to this condition. 'When you stand to pray, forgive if you have aught against any man, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your sins.'<sup>14</sup> And the same duty is strikingly enforced in the parable of the Two Debtors.<sup>15</sup> If, therefore, a person were to use this prayer while he maintained an unforgiv-

<sup>14</sup> S. Mark xi. 25.

<sup>15</sup> S. Matt. xviii. 24.

ing spirit against his neighbour, which he did not resist or strive to overcome, he would be praying against himself. 'If you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your sins.'<sup>16</sup>

**Lead us not into Temptation.**—The last petition was against the effects of past sins ; this one is against future sin. For sin begins with temptation ; and to escape from sin we must resist temptation. There are two points to be considered here ; first, the nature of temptation, and how we pray of God not to lead us into it.

Temptation has three sources. It may come from the bad example of others, especially if they have influence over us. The great bulk of those living in the world are not religious people, but are such 'as love the vanities, riches, and pleasures of this world better than God.' It is easy and natural to do like others. It is very difficult to go contrary to the way of the world. The world and its ways and maxims is therefore a cause of temptation to us. The flesh is another ; that is, our own passions and desires, which, if not restrained by mortification, are sure to run away with us, and lead to sin and ruin. And a third source of temptation is the devil and his angels, who not only endeavour to lead us into offending God by means of the world and the flesh, but also by subtle delusions and special temptations of their own, by which those chiefly are assailed who have already overcome temptations of the world and the flesh.<sup>17</sup> These are the three sources of temptation.

To be tempted, however, is not in itself a sin. Our Lord, we read, was led by the Holy Spirit into the desert

<sup>16</sup> S. Matt. vi. 15.

<sup>17</sup> 'For our wrestling is not (only) against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world, of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places' (Eph. iv. 12).

to be tempted by the devil, who assailed Him with a temptation of the flesh and of the world, as well as one that was more entirely diabolical.<sup>18</sup> So it is no sin to be attacked with temptation. Sin only begins when the temptation is not resisted or is yielded to. Temptation means being tried, and it is necessary that we should be tempted. For without trial there is no reward; we are put here on our trial that we may gain an exceeding great reward. So Moses said to the Israelites, 'The Lord your God trieth you, that it may appear whether you love Him with all your heart and soul, or no.'<sup>19</sup> 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he hath been proved he shall receive the crown of life which God hath promised to them that love Him.'<sup>20</sup> Temptations, moreover, are the materials out of which sanctity is built up, as they are a great means of maintaining humility in those who would otherwise be lifted up by their attainments and successes, and by the greatness of God's gifts and graces to them. S. Paul tells us that they were sent to him with this purpose.<sup>21</sup> And they further serve to increase fervour, and to spur men on to greater exertions in the service of God.

But though we must be prepared for temptation, and all the more if we desire to serve God perfectly, yet it is one of the secrets of success in leading a good life that we should not seek temptation, or go into the way of it, or make it for ourselves. 'He that loveth danger shall fall by it.' If temptation comes to us in the way of our duty, we are comparatively safe, but not if we go in the way of it. As being careful of ourselves and keep-

<sup>18</sup> 'For we have not a High-Priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin' (Heb. iv. 15).

<sup>19</sup> Deut. xiii. 3.

<sup>20</sup> S. James i. 12.

<sup>21</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 7.

ing out of danger is the way to preserve life and health, so is it the way to preserve our souls and God's grace. The great means for not falling into sin is, not exposing ourselves to temptation,—fearing it, and keeping out of the way of it, because we are keenly alive to our weakness and liability to fall. This diffidence of self is a note of sanctity. And it is this which is the meaning of this petition. As our Lord exhorted His three chosen Apostles to watch and pray that they might not enter into temptation, so He puts this prayer into the mouths of all His disciples, 'Lead us not into temptation.' We should fear temptation lest it may be too great for us, and so we pray that we may not be exposed to it; but as the real evil is not the temptation, but yielding to it, our prayer will be fully answered by God's guarding us from such temptations as are beyond our present strength, and by granting us such grace and protection as may bring us safely out of the temptation. S. Paul sets forth the sense of this petition when he says that God 'will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with temptation issue' (*i.e.* means of escape) 'that you may be able to bear it.'<sup>22</sup> In this prayer we should not merely think of ourselves, but of those whom we know to be especially exposed to temptation and who are weak, and such in particular as are dear to ourselves or under our care.

**Deliver us from Evil.**—The 'Our Father' concludes with the seventh petition, in which we pray to be delivered from evil, or, as it is sometimes put, from all evil. When our Lord was about to leave the world He uttered a similar prayer for His disciples. 'I do not ask that Thou take them out of the world, but that Thou preserve them from evil.'<sup>23</sup> This explains the sense in which we

<sup>22</sup> 1 Cor. x. 13.

<sup>23</sup> S. John xvii. 15.

use this petition. It does not mean that we are to expect to be exempted from the common trials and ills of life because we are serving God. For we are left in this world in order to be tried, and the trials of life are the means by which we learn humility, patience, charity, and resignation. But we ask that God would preserve us from those things that are hurtful to us. Evil is of two kinds—spiritual and temporal. Spiritual evil is that which injures the soul by separating it from God, and this is always an evil, so that we pray always and unconditionally to be delivered from this. But temporal ills, such as sickness, poverty, suffering, loneliness, accidents, and ill-usage, though always evil in the sense that they are trying and disagreeable, are not always bad for us. Often they are remedial, and if taken with a good spirit, as permitted by God to happen to us for our present punishment and improvement, are good for us. Though these evils are, for the most part at least, not caused by God, but by the gifts of God being misused by men and perverted by evil spirits, yet they are all under God's control, who can stay them if He pleases, or let them go on, because they will turn to greater good. In praying, then, to be delivered from these temporal evils, we leave it to Him to determine what is good and what is bad for us, and ask (1) to be delivered from that which is not good for us, and (2) that those evils that are permitted for our good may be so in effect by our profiting by them, that we may draw good and not evil from them. And as in the other petitions, so here, we are not only to pray for ourselves, but when others—our friends, relatives, benefactors—are in trial or misfortune, we pray for their delivery from it, or that it may be turned to their greater good. This petition, to be used sincerely, implies certain dispositions, and so teaches them. How can we pray to be delivered from

spiritual evil if we do not ourselves try to keep out of the way of it, guarding ourselves from those things that we know will lead us into it? And so of temporal evils it is quite lawful to pray to be delivered from them, but then we must use our own endeavours and exertions for the purpose. God has put this world and the things in it to a great extent in our power, and if we wish to avoid trouble, suffering, and other evils, we must do our own part towards this, using our own good sense and experience and exertion to prevent and remedy them as far as we can, and pray to God for His help and blessing on our endeavours to avoid evil, and not instead of using those endeavours.

The word 'Amen' at the end of prayer expresses a fervent concurrence with what is asked—'Be it so,' 'God grant it.'



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